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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

THE SOUL AND THE BODY  
IN HEGEL'S ANTHROPOLOGY

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PROGRAM IN PHILOSOPHY

BY

NICHOLAS MOWAD

CHICAGO, IL

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my professors, who have greatly contributed to my understanding of Hegel and of philosophy generally. Above all, I would like to thank Adriaan Peperzak, whose patient direction and insightful commentary have allowed me to improve my work to a large extent and whose own research on Hegel has provided me with a model of depth and clarity. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Ardis Collins, in whose courses I first encountered Hegel, and whose interpretive rigor and lucid presentation inspired me to try my own hand at Hegel scholarship.

I would like to express my appreciation as well for the Arthur J. Schmitt Foundation, whose generosity and commitment to research and humanity have given me the means to complete this dissertation.

I would like to thank my parents and my siblings for their encouragement and support.

Most of all, I would like to thank my wife, who has contributed more than anyone (including Hegel) to my understanding of what it is to be human, and how human feelings cannot be reduced to biology.

To my wife.

Insofern der Geist natürliches, sinnliches Dasein hat, ist die menschliche Gestalt die einzige Weise, in der es angeschaut werden kann. Das heißt aber nicht, daß der Geist ein Sinnliches, Materielles ist, sondern die Weise seiner Unmittelbarkeit, Realität, sein Sein für anderes, sein Angeschautwerden ist in menschlicher Gestalt. Deshalb haben die Griechen die Götter als Menschen vorgestellt. Dies hat man den Griechen wie auch [anderen] Völkern übernommen; es muß nicht gesagt werden, daß die Menschen es tun, weil es ihre Gestalt sei, als ob damit die Sache erschöpft wäre, sondern sie tun recht daran, weil dies die einzige Gestalt ist, in der der Geist existiert; in Löwengestalt z. B. kann doch wohl das Geistige nicht hervortreten. Die Organisation des Menschen aber ist nur die Gestalt des Geistigen; die Notwendigkeit dieses Zusammenhangs gehört dem Gebiet der Physiologie, der Naturphilosophie an und ist ein schwieriger, in der Tat noch zu wenig erörterter Punkt.

– G.W.F. Hegel

## PREFACE

Philosophy is widely regarded as the most difficult of all disciplines: this is no doubt in part because philosophers rarely write with the intention or hope of being read by a wide audience. With the emergence in the 17th and 18th centuries of figures like Descartes, Leibniz, Locke, and the Enlightenment *philosophes*, it must have seemed for a brief time that this tendency was changing, that philosophers were writing for an audience not of academic experts, but simply of an educated, middle-class public. Yet any hopes that philosophy would become a discipline readily accessible to the common person must have been dashed when the popular philosophy of the Enlightenment gave way to the exceedingly abstruse reflections of the movement we call “German Idealism,” which culminated in the nearly opaque work of G.W.F. Hegel.

It has been fashionable for nearly two centuries to bash Hegel as not only excessively difficult, but criminally obscure, perhaps even utterly nonsensical. Many philosophers—even some philosophical movements—have made a name for themselves by ridiculing Hegel for his supposed incomprehensibility and celebrating his demise from the world of letters and culture. Yet every time some zealous thinker takes it upon him or herself to bury Hegel, Hegel emerges again to prove that he is far from dead. It must be granted, even by committed Hegelians, that Hegel is difficult to read. Yet the reason for this difficulty, the divergence of Hegel’s writing from the plain spoken style of the man on the street, is not the result of any deficiency in Hegel’s thought, but rather the poverty

of the ‘common-sense’ way of speaking. Hegel writes the way he does because that is the only way his insights can be expressed. Hegel does not take for granted the apparatus of sophisms and half-truths that is ‘the common-sense attitude’: he pulverizes it and reworks the residue into a proper philosophical system. Such a system can only strike the uninitiated as bizarre and nonsensical, but this impression demonstrates not a flaw in Hegel’s philosophy; rather, it demonstrates only the vast extent to which ‘common sense thinking’ falls short of properly rational, philosophical cognition.

Insofar as Hegel’s philosophy is worthy of study yet not immediately accessible, there is a need for commentators to undertake exegetical work on the various parts of Hegel’s corpus, particularly those parts that are the most obscure. I intend this dissertation to be an exegetical study of a short, twenty-five paragraph section of Hegel’s *Encyclopedia* that he calls “the anthropology,” and which has as its object “the soul.” The soul as Hegel understands it is what makes the human body different from other bodies. Hegel’s anthropology is thus a study of the intersection of what is distinctly human and what is corporeal, i.e. it is a study of the specifically human kind of corporeity: this study culminates in an analysis of habit.

Habit is in some sense immediately familiar to everyone: every human being has developed innumerable habits, through which his or her experience of the world is mediated. Yet, as Hegel says, sometimes what is most familiar is least understood: this is certainly the case with habit. Habit is, after all, the ability not to experience a certain feeling that results from the experience of that feeling; it is a mental



phenomenon, yet one which is actually characterized by the absence of thinking, or mental activity. Clearly then, only a bit of reflection on habit is necessary to reveal the startling obscurity enshrouding this ostensibly clear and familiar phenomenon. Habit is however, in the end, a rational and comprehensible phenomenon, as I believe this dissertation will show. In the course of this demonstration, Hegel's anthropology, his understanding of the ensouled body of the human being, will likewise become clear.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse (1830)</i>	<i>EPW</i>
<i>Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts</i>	<i>GPR</i>
<i>Phänomenologie des Geistes</i>	<i>PG</i>
<i>Vorlesungen über die Philosophie des Geistes</i>	<i>VPG</i>
<i>Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte</i>	<i>VPGes</i>
<i>Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion (1824)</i>	<i>VPR (1824)</i>
<i>Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion (1827)</i>	<i>VPR (1827)</i>
<i>Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion (1831)</i>	<i>VPR (1831)</i>
<i>Wissenschaft der Logik</i>	<i>WL</i>
<i>Anmerkung</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>Zusatz</i>	<i>Z</i>

CHAPTER ONE:  
INTRODUCTION TO THE BODY AND SOUL

Introduction: a note on the text

In this dissertation we will investigate Hegel's understanding of what it is to be human. The corporeity, or embodiment of humans will be of special concern to us. The text with which we will concern ourselves the most will be Hegel's anthropology, a relatively short section in his *Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences in Outline*.

We must state at the outset that Hegel is very difficult. Hegel's famous dictum that "the true is the whole" applies nowhere better than to his own work: one must understand *all* of the *Encyclopedia* if one is really to understand any of it. Yet even reading a small fraction of Hegel's work can be very frustrating because he quite literally creates his own terminology, which is as foreign to native German speakers as its English translation is to us. This difficulty is compounded by the fact that Hegel's discussion of 'human nature' in the anthropology exists only "in outline [*im Grundrisse*]": this outline consists of a mere twenty-five short paragraphs, some also with short remarks appended to them (added by Hegel in the *Encyclopedia*'s second and third editions).

We may also make careful use of the *Zusätze*, the additions from Hegel's lectures collected and published by Boumann (one of Hegel's students) after his death. Hegel intended the *Encyclopedia* to be a handbook for use in his classes, and therefore expected that its readers would also get the benefit of hearing his lectures. As one might expect, the

lectures give more examples and the language is generally more down to earth—this can of course be very helpful in understanding Hegel. However, because these additions were never actually published by Hegel, we must always take what is attributed to Hegel in the *Zusätze* with a grain of salt, and seek corroboration in the text that Hegel actually published for any point made in the *Zusätze*: it is always possible that the student who took the notes was inserting his own interpretation. Even if a point appears in the notes of several students, or in the lectures given over different semesters—that is, even if it is extremely likely that Hegel did actually make a certain point in his lectures—we must acknowledge that Hegel no doubt spoke with greater latitude in his lectures than he would have allowed himself in his written, published work.

Another problem with Boumann's *Zusätze* is that they conceal any divergence among the various transcripts of the 'circle of friends' from which these *Zusätze* are composed. Thus any changes Hegel may have made over the course of his lectures on subjective spirit from the Summer of 1820 to the winter of 1829/1830 are also concealed in these *Zusätze* for the sake of achieving a speciously authoritative status. Recently however, new transcripts have come to light (viz. those of Erdmann and Walter from the Winter semester of 1827/1828): these were published by Felix Meiner Verlag in 1994. The editors Hespe and Tuschling confirm the unprecedented reliability of the Erdmann transcript, especially as it can be cross-checked with Walter's version<sup>1</sup> (both are published together but not merged into one version that glosses over the differences between them).

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<sup>1</sup> *VP*G pp.280-281.



However, any exegetical work on Hegel's anthropology must begin by plainly acknowledging that Boumann's *Zusätze* contain much more material on certain parts of the anthropology than do Erdmann's or Walter's transcripts. Accordingly, the presence of the *Zusätze* in some of what follows is often more pronounced. However, we must still make every effort to use the *Zusätze* critically: e.g. giving preference to remarks that appear both in Erdmann and Walter's transcripts and Boumann's *Zusätze*. We will rely more heavily on Boumann's *Zusätze* only when Erdmann's and Walter's transcripts do not cover a certain aspect of the *Haupttext* or cover it minimally. Furthermore, whenever making use of lecture notes from any source, we will do so only for the sake of illustration of or elaboration on a point made in the *Haupttext*.

Thus while the *Zusätze* should not be neglected, we must be very careful in making use of them to interpret Hegel: we must always allow Hegel's published material to have the final word; and when a *Zusatz* makes a point on which his published material is silent, we must discount what is said in the *Zusatz* accordingly. The only writing of unimpeachable authenticity therefore are the twenty-five paragraphs and their occasional remarks that constitute the *Encyclopedia*'s anthropology "in outline." Hegel wrote entire books which were expanded and more explanatory versions of some parts of his *Encyclopedia* (e.g. the greater *Logic* and the *Philosophy of Right*), but he died before he was ever able to do this for the anthropology.

Given these difficulties, it is best not to dive directly into the text. Rather, a preliminary overview of where we are headed, given in more plain language, will put us in a position to better understand Hegel when we turn later to the text in order to decipher

his terminology. This first chapter is intended therefore as an introduction to the problem with which we are concerned: viz. the human being's relationship to his or her own body; or, the relation between the soul and the body.

### Preliminary examination of some preconceptions concerning the body and soul

The difficulty in understanding Hegel does not lie solely in the manner of Hegel's presentation. The greatest obstacles to understanding what Hegel has to tell us about the human soul and body are the false preconceptions that the reader likely already has about what the soul is and what the body is. These preconceptions are so deeply rooted that one may not even be aware that one has them and that they are questionable. We can state these prejudices briefly thus: the soul is immaterial, radically different from and alien to the body; and the human body is simply matter, nearly identical with the body of an animal—and indeed, insofar as it is essentially just extension, the human body is not different in kind from the matter composing a block of wood, or a stone. The human being, as body and soul, seems thus to be a god in the body of an animal, spirit trapped in matter—in other words, a monster. Let us examine in greater depth the (un-Hegelian) interpretations of the human being as somehow an immaterial soul present in a body that is simply extension.

For the rest of this chapter we will examine these two false conceptions of body and soul with the sole purpose of making clear that Hegel does not understand the body and soul in these ways. This dissertation will not be occupied with refuting these conceptions of the human body and soul. Instead, it will be an exegetical investigation into Hegel's own conception of the human body and soul, which however must be

prefaced by an acknowledgement of the preconceptions many people already have on this subject, and a warning that Hegel should not be taken as endorsing these preconceptions. Without further ado, let us direct our attention to these false preconceptions so that we can have a good idea of what Hegel *does not* say, before turning our attention to what he *does* say in subsequent chapters.

*The human being as soul imprisoned in a body; and the human being as body only*

Two definitions of the human being that Hegel rejects are: (1) that the human being is essentially incorporeal, not of this world, though it currently finds itself within a body; (2) that the human being is solely an extended, living body, that it does not transcend extension and biology in any way. Though Hegel rejects these definitions<sup>2</sup> (and he does so with cause), there is a reason why these definitions have the currency that they enjoy: neither is without its merits in explaining certain features of the human being.

The first definition has the benefit of being able to account for some of the extraordinary and wondrous capacities of human beings, capacities that it seems could never belong to mere extended or living bodies. These capacities include what we might call pure thought (thought unmixed with sensible content or any influence of sensibility),<sup>3</sup> and pure will (willing an end without regard to any sensible inclinations).<sup>4</sup> However, this

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<sup>2</sup> Hegel's rejection of these definitions cannot easily be located in one paragraph: rather, it is spread throughout the anthropology. However, we can refer to *EPW* §387 (where Hegel says that the soul is "spirit in nature") to show that Hegel rejects the idea that the human being is essentially immaterial, and to *EPW* §381-384 (on the concept of spirit) to show how Hegel understands the difference between spirit (even in corporeal form) and nature.

<sup>3</sup> Plato uses this as proof for an immaterial soul (*Phaedo* 65d-66a, *Theaetetus* 184b-185d). See below for details.

<sup>4</sup> Kant uses this as something resembling a proof for an immaterial soul (see *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* pp.107-108, *Ak.* 4-5). However, for Kant it can never be proved that there actually is an

first definition has the drawback of being ill-equipped to explain how an immaterial soul can interact with a material body, or be present ‘within’ a body at all.

The second definition (viz. that the human being is an extended, living body only) does not admit that there is anything like pure thought or pure will, and so it has the benefit of not having to explain how something immaterial could interact with a material body. For proponents of this definition, all so-called ‘pure’ thought is only abstraction from previous sensible experience; and all so-called ‘pure’ will remains mere desire rooted in sensible inclination (but with the addition of self-deception, giving the impression of volitional purity). The drawback of this second definition is that it seems to contradict our experience of these ‘pure’ acts of the soul.

We will say more about each of these alternatives, but first we should note that Hegel agrees with neither of these definitions. For Hegel, the soul is not simply immaterial (alien to corporeity), and it does not live on as a ghost when the body dies; yet nor is the human being mere extension, or mere biology. Indeed, Hegel devotes a good deal of effort to showing that the alternative accounts of the human being as either a mere animal (whose behavior is determined by stimuli), or as an immaterial, otherworldly ghost somehow at present inhabiting an earthly body, present us with a false opposition. We need not choose between these accounts of the human being, because, while each is partially true, each is *only* partially true (and thus partially false as well). The human being is neither merely a sophisticated animal, nor a ghostly specter. At this point it is

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immaterial soul. Such a statement would belong to theoretical philosophy; yet something immaterial lies outside the bounds of all possible experience and so can never be confirmed (see the third paralogism in *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* pp.479-483, *Ak.* A361-366). Kant’s “proof” here has validity only as a practical postulate: we are justified in believing that we have a soul and are capable of free, moral, rational action, though we cannot affirm that we actually do have such a soul.

possible for us only to *affirm* that the human being is not simply either of those alternatives. Much more investigation and explanation will be required before we will be able to give a positive definition, i.e. to articulate precisely what the human being is. In order to reach the true definition of the soul, let us examine the partially false and partially true definitions on the assumption that close examination will reveal what in them is false and what in them is true.

*The Platonic thesis: the human being as a soul imprisoned in a body*

Before we begin to examine what I am calling “the Platonic thesis,” a word of warning: my account of ‘the Platonic thesis’ here is meant as a heuristic tool, to provide a sharp contrast with the materialist definition of the human being for the sole purpose of explaining the third, Hegelian definition. My purpose here is not to dwell too much on the nuances of Plato,<sup>5</sup> but rather to present a version of Plato that best facilitates the later explanation of Hegel.

There seems to be good reason to believe that there is something in us which is incorporeal: let this incorporeal part or capacity be called our “soul,” and let this definition be called “the Platonic definition” since Plato was one of its most prominent

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<sup>5</sup> There is some reason to believe that Plato was not defending a theory of the soul as radically distinct and internally unrelated to the body. For example, in the *Timaeus*, Plato articulates a myth in which the demiurge (the God, the creator of the world’s soul and body, as well as the bodies and souls of all living things) originally coexists with the intelligible order of forms (28a), the material or proto-material “traces” of what will eventually be built up into the four elements (fire, air, earth, and water) (30c-31a), and a mysterious “receptacle” whose churning will cause the combination and dissolution of elements in the created world (49e-51a). The demiurge creates the immortal part of the human soul from a mixture of the forms of sameness, difference, and being (41d), and leaves it to the gods to create the mortal (sensible) part of the human soul (42a-b, 69c-71e). On the one hand, the fact that the world of forms originally coexists alongside the primordial chaos of material or proto-material “traces” of the elements would indicate that form and materiality (and by extension, soul and body) are indeed different in kind. However, the fact that the demiurge builds up these “traces” into the material elements by giving them shape and order, and that it is these already *formed* elements which will make up the human body, seem to indicate that the *human* body and *human* soul are not radically opposed.

advocates. As we will see toward the end of the chapter, Hegel and Plato are to a large extent in agreement. Yet in denying that the soul is immaterial (in the sense of being foreign to the body), Hegel signals a clear departure from Plato.<sup>6</sup>

For Plato, the soul is independent of the body insofar as it is capable of activities which are independent of the body. For example, there are things that we are capable of knowing which are not sensibly perceptible (e.g. justice itself, beauty itself, other Platonic forms). But if we were mere bodies, then we would never have any inkling of something not sensibly perceptible. The inability of a mere body to have knowledge of something not sensibly perceptible, coupled with the fact that we *do* have such knowledge, allows us to conclude that there must be something in us which is not corporeal. Plato gives this proof that we have a soul (*psyche*) in the *Phaedo*.<sup>7</sup>

He gives a similar proof in the *Theaetetus*, where he has Socrates argue that each of our sense organs is receptive to certain kinds of sensations (eyes to colors and shapes, ears to sounds, etc.). But everything that we perceive also exhibits identity, difference, and existence. Moreover, we somehow ‘perceive’ these non-sensible properties (viz. identity, difference, and existence), yet we do not do so with any of our sense organs. Therefore, since we do in fact somehow apprehend identity, difference, and existence, but these are unknown to our sense organs, we must have a mind or soul which is immaterial, and which apprehends these non-sensible properties.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> For a nuanced treatment of Hegel’s position on the so-called “immateriality” of the soul, see Michael Wolff’s remarkable book *Das Körper-Seele Problem: Kommentar zu Hegel, Enzyklopädie (1830) §389* (pp.114-155). We will have many occasions to discuss Wolff’s analysis in later chapters.

<sup>7</sup> *Phaedo* 65d-66a

<sup>8</sup> *Theaetetus* 184b-185d

In the *Phaedo* and the *Theaetetus*, Plato thus argues that there must be an immaterial part of the human being based on a general rule and an undeniable fact. The general rule has two parts: (1) that knowledge is or entails a relationship between two terms (the knower and the known); and (2) that this relationship is possible only if there is an affinity in the natures of two terms. Thus only a corporeal being can know bodies: an immaterial being could never know bodies (or at least that in bodies which is sensible) because bodies can only be experienced by material sense organs, i.e. other bodies. Likewise, an unintelligent brute (or an inanimate body) can never know an immaterial object (like the form of justice), because such an object is immaterial and hence has no affinity with what is a mere body and not at all incorporeal. The undeniable fact that constitutes the rest of Plato's proof for the immaterial soul is the fact that we do know immaterial things. Even if we are uncertain as to their precise natures, we do undeniably have some inkling of the unseen, the immaterial—otherwise we would not even be able to conceive of the possibility of such a thing, and hence would not be able to question whether such a thing might actually exist. Even to deny that there are immaterial things belies an understanding of what the immaterial is, and hence an affinity between oneself (or something in oneself) and the immaterial—such that the immaterial therefore exists at very least in oneself.

Plato argues for a human soul that is immaterial, which is originally non-corporeal, and is capable of once again detaching itself from the body. We may thus say that Plato argues for a human soul that is alien to the body. When I say that for Plato the soul is “alien to the body,” I mean that for Plato there is nothing in the nature of the soul

which necessarily brings it into relationship with a body. The fact that the soul does have a relationship with the body is therefore mysterious for Plato: no proper explanation can be given for it: only a myth can represent to us the fact that the soul is 'in' a body. The body's foreignness to the soul is further shown by the fact that for Plato the body is a hindrance to the soul,<sup>9</sup> which keeps it from attaining its desired object (a pure knowledge of and communion with the forms).<sup>10</sup> Thus for Plato the body is a *prison* for the soul.<sup>11</sup>

That the body may be called a prison for the soul, and that it hinders the soul from attaining the end the soul has in virtue of the sort of thing that the soul is, seem to indicate that the human being (as an ensouled body) is a sort of *monster*, the combination of two incongruent elements. Yet in truth, the human is not a monster for Plato because for him the human proper is *the soul*, and not at all the body. The body is at best only a fairly accurate *image* of the human being (i.e. of the soul). For Plato if we want to know what a human being is, we should not look at this or that particular, actually existing human being. Particular, actually existing human beings can give us some indication as to what a human being is, but they can also mislead us. Rather, we should ignore what we see with our eyes. Our eyes are corporeal sense organs that can grasp sensible objects, but they cannot see immaterial forms; and it is immaterial forms, which we know only through our soul, which truly tell us what it is to be a certain kind of thing (such as a human being). Our soul is thus not only that in virtue of which we are able to know what a

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<sup>9</sup> *Phaedo* 65a-c. Other, equally mythical explanations are given in the *Republic* (613b-621d), the *Phaedrus* (246a-249d) and the *Timaeus* (42e-44d).

<sup>10</sup> *Phaedo* 65e-66d

<sup>11</sup> *Phaedo* 62b



human being truly is, it is the very thing which makes us human. Despite the differences between Plato and Hegel, there is prefigured here in Plato's anthropology the thesis that Hegel will expound later: viz. that the human being is characterized by (the capacity for) self-knowledge.

The problem with the Platonic definition is that while it does manage to explain certain features of our experience (such as pure thought), it fails to explain other features which seem equally real: for example, involuntary feelings, adventitious impressions (impressions received from outside without effort on my part, or even my consent, for example, pain).<sup>12</sup> The soul seems to be constantly awash in sensible content received through the body. Yet if the soul feels objects around it, that would mean that it has an affinity with particular, material objects. This affinity with particular, material objects would seem to contradict the soul's previously established affinity with the immaterial.

Furthermore, that the soul receives these sensible impressions *through its body* would indicate that the soul has a special, very intimate and very mysterious relationship with one material thing in particular: viz. its own body (whatever "own" might mean in this context). The very fact that the soul 'has' a body should be a bit shocking and incomprehensible given the nature of the Platonic soul.

Moreover, the relation between body and soul which seems *in fact* to be the case allows not just for the body to influence the soul (by the body's receipt of sense impressions and transmission of them to the soul), but also for the soul to influence the body: what we call voluntary movement can be nothing other than the soul directing the

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<sup>12</sup> Feeling may not seem to be in-itself spiritual insofar as it necessarily involves disturbance from *without*, by *another*. However, we cannot consider feeling to be utterly devoid of a spiritual dimension insofar as the feeling itself—if not its material 'cause'—lies *in* the soul, and is not itself something material.

behavior of the body. Involuntary movement would only be another body acting on one's 'own' body, possibly contrary to the directives being ordered by the soul. Yet how can the soul give an order to the body, with which it has ostensibly no affinity? And how can the body receive such an order?

*The materialist thesis: the human being as a body only*

The second definition is that of materialism.<sup>13</sup> For materialists like Epicurus and Hobbes, the person simply is their body (which they understand as basically an animal body). The only thing these philosophers admit as real is what affects the senses, i.e. the receptive part of the body—and it is only other bodies that affect the senses. What is unable to be sensed is not real. Epicurus says: “death is nothing to us. For all good and evil consist in sensation, but death is deprivation of sensation”<sup>14</sup> and thus “so long as we exist, death is not with us; but when death comes, then we do not exist.”<sup>15</sup> It is worth noting that for Plato, death is the separation of the soul from the body,<sup>16</sup> and philosophy is “practicing death”<sup>17</sup> because philosophy is the soul's communion with immaterial forms, and thus is the expression of the soul's independence from the body. Seen in this context, it is clear that Epicurus' position that death is nothing to us, that it is beyond our capacity

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<sup>13</sup> I would like to state again that my purpose in this chapter is not to offer a refutation of the materialist understanding of the human being, nor to refute the 'Platonic' understanding. Rather, I only raise these conceptions in order to make clear that Hegel disagrees with them, and that we should be careful to allow Hegel to explain to us what *he* means by “body” and “soul” rather than imposing our own definitions on to these terms.

<sup>14</sup> Epicurus, “Epicurus to Menoeceus” p.85.

<sup>15</sup> Epicurus, “Epicurus to Menoeceus” p.85. See also Epicurus “Principle Doctrines” II p.95.

<sup>16</sup> Plato, *Phaedo*, 64c, 67d.

<sup>17</sup> Plato, *Phaedo* 64a, 67e, 81a.

to experience the separation of the soul from the body, is nothing short of a denial of the possibility of (Platonic) philosophy. (Again, despite their differences, Plato and Hegel are yet in agreement that what is distinctly human, the soul, necessarily involves the death of the natural body; and that this ‘death’ *can* be experienced by human beings).

Accordingly, wisdom (knowledge of things immaterial<sup>18</sup>) is not prized by Epicurus. Rather, prudence is held to be the chief virtue.<sup>19</sup> That is, proper calculation in seeking pleasure and avoiding pain—in other words, concern for what is material and sensibly experienced, i.e. concern for the organic body—is the crowning achievement of what is ‘intellectual’ in the human being. Epicurus accordingly makes sensation the criterion of truth.<sup>20</sup> All of these Epicurean positions point to the underlying conception of the human being as a body only, and no soul (if by “soul” we mean something other than sensation, or the reckoning of sense data). For Hobbes as well, our mind receives all of its content from the sense organs,<sup>21</sup> and admits reason only as a power of reckoning immediate sense data or its derivatives.<sup>22</sup>

Never, according to these materialists, is the human being in touch with anything that is incorporeal, and thus it can never be admitted that the human being is itself wholly or partially incorporeal. Epicurus, Hobbes, and Plato all agree that we know that with which we have an affinity; i.e. the subject is of the same nature (e.g. either corporeal or

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<sup>18</sup> Plato, *Phaedo* 79a-d.

<sup>19</sup> Epicurus, “Epicurus to Menoeceus,” p.91; “Principle Doctrines” V p.95.

<sup>20</sup> Epicurus, “Principle Doctrines” XXIII p.101.

<sup>21</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan* p.21.

<sup>22</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan* p.41.

incorporeal) as the object. Epicurus and Hobbes however oppose Plato in denying that the human subject has any idea of anything incorporeal (which it did not fabricate itself, and hence which is not totally fictional); for this reason Epicurus and Hobbes deny that there is any need to admit of a soul in the human being.

*Atlas: an image of the human being (that Hegel would reject)*

The opposing views of the human being can therefore be presented as: (1) the view that the human being is an immaterial soul, only problematically related to a body; and (2) the view that the human being is a body only, with no soul. Both accounts have their merits and the drawbacks: both are able to explain certain parts of human experience, but both also seem inadequate to explain certain other parts. Because both of these accounts have their merits, we would like to affirm them both, and in this desire we are torn in different directions, like the sons of Iapetos, a mythical figure from whose sons (Prometheus, Epimetheus, Menoitios, and Atlas) the Greeks thought human beings descended.<sup>23</sup> Accordingly, the characters and fates of these ancestors of humankind, in which they are always torn in opposing directions, displays what the Greek poets understood to be the human condition.

For instance, as a pair, Prometheus (foreknowledge) and Epimetheus (knowledge after the fact) clearly illustrate the divine ability of humans to know before experience (*a priori*), and the animal need for experience in order to know (*a posteriori*). Menoitios (he

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<sup>23</sup> Apollodorus says both that Prometheus created humans from water and earth (*Library* 1.45) and that later, after the flood, Deucalion (the son of Epimetheus and Pandora) threw stones over his shoulder and thereby made men (the stones thrown by his wife Pyrrha became women) (*Library*, 1.47-48).

who is awaited by *oitos*, mortal doom<sup>24</sup>) expresses the mortality of humans. However, the condition of Atlas provides the image that best represents this deficient understanding of the human being. As is well known, Atlas ends up at the far eastern edge of the world, forced to hold up the sky.<sup>25</sup> Atlas has his feet planted on the earth and his hands raised up, touching the sky: he is therefore stretched between heaven and earth (the divine and the natural), with a share in both, but not belonging completely to either. Not only is Atlas (i.e. the human being in this poetic representation) the very point of contact of the divine and the natural, he is also that which keeps them separate, such that they can never be identified, and the human being can never be simply one kind of thing with one nature. Rather, the human being must (according to the poets) remain a monster: a god in an earthly, animal body.

Atlas is placed at the eastern edge of the world perhaps because it is in the east that the sun rises: i.e. it is in the east that heaven separates from the earth. The pillars of Heracles on the other hand are located at the far western edge of the world<sup>26</sup> (where the sun sets, and heaven and earth come together), because Heracles was a man who through his labors became divinized,<sup>27</sup> living forever as a constellation in the heavens. Heracles thus represents the union of the divine and the earthly, as Atlas represents their opposition (even as both the divine and the corporeal are present in the human being). That being such a point of unbearable tension is the immutable human condition

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<sup>24</sup> The Hungarian classicist Karl Kerényi gives this as a translation of Menoitios in his *Prometheus* p.37.

<sup>25</sup> Apollodorus, *Library* 2.119-121.

<sup>26</sup> Apollodorus, *Library* 2.107.

<sup>27</sup> Apollodorus, *Library* 2.160.

according to the poets is further expressed by the fact that were Atlas to let go and allow the sky to fall toward the earth (i.e. were he to allow the two aspects of the human being to become identified), he would be crushed, destroyed. Thus according to the poets, the human being is a monster, or not at all.

The image of Atlas accurately represents the human condition insofar as it presents the human as at once corporeal, and as having something that is denied to the rest of the corporeal world (viz. a soul); yet though both elements are present, this image fails to integrate the body and the soul of the human being, and is defective to that extent. It is instructive for us to reflect on the defects of this image because this image displays for us the presuppositions that many people had previously and continue to have regard the body and soul. It is these presuppositions which prevent some people from understanding what the soul and body are, and how they are related. We mentioned above that one presupposition is that the soul is immaterial, like a ghost inhabiting the body, which is for it something alien. Hegel objects to this image of the soul, asserting rather that the soul is necessarily ‘in’ a body, i.e. that corporeity (at least corporeity *of a certain kind*) belongs to the essence of the soul. This claim may sound ridiculous to someone like Plato, who conceives of the soul as immaterial: after all, how can something immaterial belong essentially to matter, which is its opposite?

One might expect at this point an argument against the idea that the soul is able to transcend nature. Yet, Hegel would rather *affirm* that the soul, as a form of spirit, is indeed able to transcend mere nature—and here Hegel shows himself to be firmly and

unambiguously opposed to materialism.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, Hegel tends much more toward the Platonic than the Epicurean understanding of the human being. However, for Hegel, the proponents of the immaterial soul have not given the *human* body its due: they treat it as a mere *thing*, an especially complex machine, or as an animal. Yet the human body is far from being a mere piece of nature: thus though Hegel affirms that the soul must be embodied, he denies that the *human* kind of embodiment is the same as other kinds of embodiment. It is true that Hegel wants to relieve Atlas of his burden, bringing the soul and the body together. Yet it is not that Hegel wants to drag the sublime soul down, to degrade it in the dirt of nature; rather, he wants to raise the human body to its proper place, above those material things which are *merely* bodies, with no souls.

The aim of this dissertation is to explain what Hegel understands as the soul: this explanation will involve showing that the soul is not something immaterial and alien to the body. Yet since for Hegel the soul is at home in its body, we can best approach an explanation of the soul by first explaining what the *human* body is. To explain what the human body is we will have to provide an explanation of corporeity in general and contrast the different kinds of bodies. In this way we will be able to show the particular nature of the human body, its special dignity, which makes it an appropriate vessel for the soul. Thus to understand what Hegel means by the soul, we must disabuse ourselves of the notion that all bodies are essentially the same, and that the essential nature of all bodies is extension. In other words, to understand Hegel we must first rid ourselves of the understanding of corporeity we have inherited from Descartes.

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<sup>28</sup> Or, Hegel is opposed at least to materialism if this is understood to imply a naturalistic understanding of human beings, i.e. the contention that human beings are essentially animals.

Demonstration that extension and mechanism do not adequately or exhaustively define  
all bodies, especially not the human body

*The Cartesian understanding of the body as extension, determined by mechanism*

Descartes gives an understanding of the human being that in a sense combines the two definitions examined above (both of which Hegel rejects), insofar as (as we will see below) for Descartes the human being is at once extended (and in this respect essentially the same as any other body) and an immaterial thinking thing. It is appropriate therefore to move from a contrast between what I loosely called the “Platonic” understanding of body and soul and the “materialist” conception of body and soul to the Cartesian understanding, since Descartes tries to reconcile an immaterial soul with a material body (understood as mere extension). As we will see in subsequent chapters, Hegel’s conception of soul and body contrasts with Descartes’ insofar as Hegel rejects the idea that the soul is alien to corporeity, but also rejects the idea that human corporeity can be reduced to mere extension, or even mere biology. Let us now proceed to Descartes’ conception of corporeity.

The Cartesian understanding of corporeity is that corporeity is quite simply extension, figure, and (the possibility of) local motion.<sup>29</sup> In other words, to be a body is first of all to take up space (to have a certain length, width, and depth), i.e. a body is *extended*; that the dimensions of a body are *certain* means that the body has a determinate *figure*; a correlate to the occupation of a determinate space is the necessary expulsion of

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<sup>29</sup> *Principles of Philosophy* Part I, Principles VIII, XXIII, LIII; Part II, Principles IV, XI, XXIV, XXV. The connection of extension and motion is of course originally articulated by Aristotle (*Physics* IV: 219a10-12).



other bodies from the space occupied by the body in question (i.e. the putting of other bodies into *motion* through contact with them, or being so put into motion).

For Hegel however, the human body however is not simply *res extensa*: i.e. it is neither exhaustively nor adequately defined by extension. Admittedly, it would be foolish to try to argue that the human body is not extended (i.e. that it lacks either length, width or depth). It would likewise be foolish to argue that the human body cannot communicate or receive motion from another body. Surely, the human body is extended; and there is a sense in which mechanical relations do hold between the human body and other bodies, and between the parts of the human body relative to each other. However, the possibility of using mechanism as a way to understand the human body is severely limited. Let us first clarify what is meant by “mechanism” before showing how the essence of the human body escapes this narrow conceptual framework.

By “mechanism” we mean a certain relation that can hold between two or more bodies. When a body comes into mechanical relation with another body, the identity of each body before the relation remains the same after this relation is established, and also after it is ended. Moreover, the only influence one body may have on another in a mechanical relation is in changing the passive object’s spatial position, or changing the passive object’s direction or rate of movement through space. But the body’s position in space, its direction and rate or movement (or rest) seem to be wholly unrelated to what the body is in-itself. Therefore, as we said above, neither the entrance into nor the

termination of a mechanical relation alters or in any way conditions the identity of a body.<sup>30</sup>

As an example of a mechanical relation we may think of any machine, such as a clock. A clock is a complex of parts that all work together to perform one task. The task of the clock is that the gears should turn each other at such a rate that the hands on the face of the clock will complete their revolutions at the appropriate rate, thus displaying the correct time to an observer. However, to remove a part of the clock, one gear, is neither to alter the identity of that part, nor to destroy it, or the remaining parts (though it would mean that the whole machine would cease to operate properly). Moreover, the part can be placed in a similar machine to the same effect.

The combination of parts to make a machine is performed by a craftsman, as is their dissolution: the bodies themselves do not seek out these mechanical relations with other bodies, and when they are brought into or removed from such relations externally, they remain indifferent to the *relata* and the relation itself. The relation that one gear bears to others in a clock is therefore something completely external to the gear itself: the gear itself does not require the establishment or maintenance of this relationship in order to be what it is; and thus neither the establishment, nor the maintenance, nor the rupture of this relation alters the identity of the gear.

To be sure, it is not our intention to denigrate the concept of mechanism: mechanism is appropriate for understanding certain aspects of corporeity. Indeed, the nature of some bodies (e.g. the parts of a clock) are entirely (or very nearly) exhausted by

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<sup>30</sup> See Hegel's explanation of mechanism as such at *EPW* §195&A, and §§253-271 for his treatment of mechanics in the philosophy of nature.

mechanical relations. To take another example, let us consider billiard balls. A billiard ball seems to rest contentedly in itself: its interactions with other objects are limited to communication of movement, and this occurs when it strikes them. Such a strike occurs only as a result of the ball having been propelled down a slope by gravity, or from having been put in motion by having been previously struck by another object. The billiard ball does not need to come into relation with any other object; and unless it strikes or is struck by another body with considerable violence (so as to break it in half for example), the ball remains unchanged by the temporary mechanical relation foisted upon it.<sup>31</sup>

It is entirely possible (indeed, inevitable) for the human body to have mechanical relations to other bodies: as I write this, my body is in a mechanical relation with the chair I am sitting in, and which is holding me up. However, the human body is unlike the billiard ball in that we would misunderstand the human body terribly if we concluded that its nature is exhausted by its mechanical relations. Recall, the billiard ball is *merely* extension: its dimensions along with its density completely (or very nearly) determine its nature and its possibilities.

*Other kinds of bodies; or, ways a body can be determined besides mechanism*

In order to understand what the human being is and what embodiment has to do with being human, we must contrast the human body with other kinds of bodies: bodies determined by mechanism, bodies determined by chemism, and organic bodies (i.e. vegetable and animal bodies). We may here introduce a scale showing the different kinds of bodies that there are in nature:

### **Human (or ensouled) bodies**

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<sup>31</sup> *EPW* §264A.

### **Organic bodies**

### **Chemical bodies**

### **Mechanical bodies**

We must however immediately acknowledge that these levels are not completely separate, i.e. that these different kinds of bodies are not utterly different. There must therefore be some overlapping between these levels: chemicals, plants, animals, and human beings can all *also* be determined mechanically. This overlapping must be acknowledged because, for example, there remains something *merely* mechanical and *merely* chemical about the plant or animal body.<sup>32</sup> However, it is also true that the organic body of a plant or animal is best understood (indeed, it can only be adequately understood) by understanding it biologically, as a living body.<sup>33</sup> Likewise, there remains something merely mechanical, merely chemical, and merely biological about the human body, but the human body can only be properly understood as an ensouled body.

It is clear then that a body with a higher determination (according to the scale above) also has the lower determinations. A body with the lower determinations on the other hand

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<sup>32</sup> Indeed, Scheler notes in comparing the plant and the animal that the concept of mechanism is *better* suited (not more ill-suited) for understanding the movement of an animal (which is more developed) than the (less developed) plant. Scheler's reasons are that the animal body's greater sophistication entails the localization of organ systems into different parts of the body, while the plant body remains indifferently vegetable throughout (*Die Stellung des Menschen im Kosmos* pp.13, 21-22). Hegel likewise considers the differentiation of the animal into organs one of the most important ways in which it is different from the plant body (*EPW* §§343, 344, 345, 350, and their *Zusätze*). Hegel would agree that the animal body's differentiation of functions and localization of organs in different parts of the body does make possible mechanical relations between the various parts of the animal body, but he would insist that these relations would be distinctly *non-organic*.

<sup>33</sup> Wendell Kisner does a fine job of explaining how a single entity is determined at once by the categories of life and mechanism in his article "The Category of Life, Mechanistic Reduction, and the Uniqueness of Biology" (*Cosmos and History* vol.4 no.1, 2008).

may, but does not necessarily, have the higher determinations.<sup>34</sup> Thus like the human body, an animal body will be moved if another body of sufficient mass and acceleration strikes it<sup>35</sup> (i.e. there remains something mechanical about these bodies); and the human body, like the animal body, contains chemicals that have the potential to react with other chemicals in the body's environment if they are brought into close enough proximity (i.e. there remains something chemical about these bodies).<sup>36</sup> However, there is something about the animal body in virtue of which it transcends the merely chemical (and a fortiori the merely mechanical); and the human body transcends even the merely biological (though this transcendence does not mean that the human body ceases altogether to be mechanical, chemical, or biological).

When we say that some bodies, while mechanical, at the same time “transcend” mere mechanism, we mean that such bodies are determined in non-mechanical ways, i.e. that what it is to be such a body (in other words, the essence of such a body) is not exhausted by mechanical determinations and relations. We could also say that a body that transcends mechanism has capacities or possibilities that are not open to a merely mechanical body.

This transcending of mechanism can also mean that the applicability of mechanical principles to the body is heavily qualified. For example, mechanical

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<sup>34</sup> Similarly, for Aristotle there are lower and higher capacities of the soul (*psyche*) such that the lower capacities sometimes exist without the higher ones (as in plants the nutritive faculty exists without any other capacity), but the higher capacities can only exist with the lower ones (as in animals locomotion and perception imply nutrition, and in humans thought implies perception, locomotion, and nutrition) (*De Anima* 413a25-413b15).

<sup>35</sup> *EPW* §265.

<sup>36</sup> *EPW* §§326-327.

principles state that a body (here it is assumed that the body is completely determined by mechanism) is moved (i.e. changes spatial position) only reactively: i.e. a body is not moved, does not come to occupy a different position in space, except through receipt of the action of another body<sup>37</sup> (e.g. one billiard ball striking another, or one gear of a clock turning another). While it is true that in a certain sense all bodies remain determined by mechanism, and thus remain susceptible to local movement by the impact of a body with sufficient force, the applicability of mechanism to a body can still be qualified insofar as the possibilities for the local movement of such a body need not be limited to reaction to a collision with another body. Moreover, there are other types of movement (besides simply traversing space) that are possible for bodies that transcend mere mechanism.<sup>38</sup>

*Example of a body transcending mechanism: the animal desiring and consuming food*

Let us consider the way in which the applicability of mechanism to a body can be qualified. This will not show us how a body can have a *soul*, i.e. how a body can be spiritual, but it will show us how a body can be more than mere mechanism, and thus how there are in fact different forms of corporeity. We said above that if a body transcends mechanism—such as, for example, a living, animal body—then it has the possibility of local motion which does not have its principle in an external colliding body. To put it differently, such a body has the possibility of *moving itself* in a non-mechanical (or super-mechanical) way. To be sure, there is also a kind of ‘self-movement’ which is

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<sup>37</sup> EPW §§264-265.

<sup>38</sup> See *Encyclopedia* §392Z where Hegel relates how human beings (and even animals) are independent of influence by planetary motion (an influence incorrectly affirmed by astrology) not because these planets are *distant*, but because the animal is *organic*, and the human being (in addition to being organic) has a soul. Distance still expresses a merely *mechanical* relation. Thus if it were only distance that separated the human or animal from the various planets of the solar system, the former would remain under the influence of the latter *tout court*.

merely mechanical: e.g., if I use my right hand to push my left hand across the table.

Insofar as this ‘self-movement’ is merely mechanical however, it is not the kind of self-movement that we are talking about here. If I use one hand to push the other hand across the table, then the hand qua moved object has a merely mechanical relation to that hand that moves it. Such motion is called ‘self-movement’ only because both hands belong to me. Non-mechanical self-movement however requires that the principle of movement come from within the very body which is to be moved: this is what the animal displays when it walks, swims, or flies (in order, say, to satisfy its desire by reaching food,<sup>39</sup> or a mate<sup>40</sup>).

The animal is able to display self-movement in this way because the animal is not merely something material: first and foremost, the animal is an organized system of functions (e.g. respiration, nutrition, sexual reproduction) which take in matter from outside and transform this matter into energy, into the very activity of carrying out these functions.<sup>41</sup> Admittedly, the matter taken in by the animal is first transformed into the organic material of the animal’s own body (e.g. muscle or fat),<sup>42</sup> but this is only a way station: in the absence of new material from outside the animal, the animal (that is, the organized system of functions) will consume its own body, transforming its muscle and fat, i.e. its own body into energy for the continuation of its functions—thus it is these functions, this vital activity, which is the animal in the strongest sense.

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<sup>39</sup> *EPW* §§359-360.

<sup>40</sup> *EPW* §369.

<sup>41</sup> “The living being only *is* and *preserves itself* as this self-reproduction, not as [merely] existing; it only is in making itself into what it is” (*EPW* §352). See also *EPW* §337

<sup>42</sup> *EPW* §364.

To be sure, we think of self-movement as freedom, but the self-movement that the animal displays when it sets itself in motion in order to satisfy an appetite is not a *free* act in the strongest sense of the term. There is an object outside of the animal (e.g. food) which arouses its instinct, and to that extent determines the animal to act.<sup>43</sup> Yet this determination is not mechanical, and the animal's movement is not mechanical: the animal's movement toward the food is not a movement toward a mechanical force pulling it (as e.g. an engine mechanically pulls a train). The food affects the animal only by being present and answering a desire already within the animal.<sup>44</sup>

To understand how animal movement is not mechanical, we need only look at the phenomenon of desire. Mechanical relations involve two terms, each of which is and remains simply different from the other.<sup>45</sup> The animal's desire however indicates that the food is not ultimately something different from or opposed to the animal: the food appears external to the animal, and so seems to be so opposed; but the animal's consumption of the object, its factual transformation of the object into its own self, is the explicit proof for the fact (of which the desire is the implicit proof) that the food was always essentially the animal's own self. Thus the animal shows itself to be in possession of the principle of its own movement by its appropriation of the object (which *appeared* to be the principle of the animal's movement), and the transformation of the object into

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<sup>43</sup> *EPW* §360-362.

<sup>44</sup> "Instinct is a *practical* relationship to it [e.g. the food], an inner stimulus tied to the semblance [*Scheine*] of an external stimulus" (*EPW* §361).

<sup>45</sup> "It is an axiom for the body in physical mechanics that a body is only ever set in motion or comes to rest through an *external cause*, such that motion and rest are only *states* of a body" (*EPW* §264A).



itself.<sup>46</sup> Therefore the identity of the two terms (the animal and the food) does not remain the same before, during, and after the establishment of the relationship (as would be the case were the relationship merely mechanical, such as the relation between the parts of a clock, or the engine and its train). The animal's consumption of the food is not merely the alteration of the position or velocity of the object (the food): it is the *destruction* of the object (insofar as it is independent), and the transformation of it into a part of the animal's own self. The two terms (animal and food) become one as the animal transforms the food into itself.<sup>47</sup>

Furthermore, the animal itself is composed of parts, each of whose identity is conditioned by the others: the organs, the flesh, etc. cannot maintain themselves in what they are (or even ultimately maintain themselves in their physical integrity) apart from the other parts of the animal's body.<sup>48</sup> Insofar as the different terms here (whether animal and the food, or the different organs of the animal) each condition the other in their identities, and in their very existence, the relation between them cannot be understood mechanically.

The animal body thus transcends mere mechanism insofar as its movement toward its food, spurred by appetite, is not a mechanical movement. In this movement the animal is not relating to something to which it remains essentially indifferent: rather, the animal is integrating into itself what was already essentially its own self. This sort of

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<sup>46</sup> *EPW* §364.

<sup>47</sup> Here Hegel is in agreement with the account Aristotle gives in *On Generation and Corruption* 321a17-22, 322a10-13.

<sup>48</sup> *EPW* §356. See also where Aristotle says, "they [material parts] cannot exist if separated from the whole; for it is a finger of an animal not in any manner whatsoever, since it is equivocally called 'a finger' if it is dead" (*Metaphysics* Z, 10: 1035b24-25).

movement, and everything belonging to it as such (hunger, consumption, and satiety for example) are possibilities unique to organic bodies (including ensouled, human bodies insofar as they are organic). Merely mechanical bodies (gears and billiard balls for example) are unable to consume; nor can they feel hunger or satiety—these forms of movement are not possible for them. Yet though the animal transcends mere mechanism, it does not transcend corporeity: the animal remains corporeal, though the corporeity proper to animal life is different from the corporeity proper to mechanism. Thus corporeity is said in many ways, and we should not understand all corporeity to be simply mechanism. Additionally, as we will see in subsequent chapters, there is a corporeity specific to humans, and this cannot be reduced to biology—and still less to mere mechanism (though for all that, it remains a form of corporeity).

Someone might object that the animal is still in this case simply determined to act mechanically: the movement toward the food would then be understood not as a purposive act, but as the rhythmic tightening and relaxation of certain muscles in the animal's legs. This tightening and relaxation of the leg muscles would mechanically propel the animal forward, and it would itself be explained by a prior mechanical cause (perhaps electrical activity in the brain of the animal which stimulates nerves in the legs, mechanically determining the muscles to tighten and relax in just the right way). Light reflected from the food on to the animal's optic nerve (producing in the animal's brain an image of the food) would be cited as a mechanical cause for the electrical activity in the brain which in turn stimulates nerves in the legs.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> See for example the mechanistic explanation of perception, locomotion, respiration, and circulation that Descartes gives in *L'Homme* (*Oeuvres de Descartes* 10:119-163).

Admittedly, it is possible for an animal body to be moved mechanically in this way and thus to carry out what for an observer would appear to be the same action. The movement of the animal's legs propelling it forward and the movement of its jaws and throat chewing and swallowing the food can possibly be effects of mechanical causes. This account is not in principle impossible, but were it true then the animal would simply not be behaving as an animal. The animal body is indeed extended: as such, it can be divided into parts; and it is possible for these parts to act on each other mechanically in the way described above<sup>50</sup>—but this (viz. that an animal remains extended and can possibly be moved mechanically) is no proof against distinctly *animal, organic* phenomena.

What the mechanist does not understand is that while the animal body does remain extended and retains certain mechanical determinations and possibilities, the animal body is not *merely* determined by mechanism, because, as we said, the animal body is not simply material. The mechanist takes the animal body to be a machine, like a complicated clock. However, a machine does not reproduce itself: yet an animal does precisely this when it consumes food. A clock is composed of material parts, each of which maintains its separate physical integrity throughout its operation. The living body on the other hand is a flux of 'parts' (i.e. cells), though we hesitate to call them that because the name 'parts' seems to imply mechanical relations. In this flux the 'parts' are constantly coming to be and passing away (as the cells making up the body are produced

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<sup>50</sup> The exceptions, which are impossible as far as a strictly mechanical explanation is concerned, are the roles played by light and electricity. Hegel of course recognizes that these phenomena cannot be understood merely mechanically (*EPW* §§317-320, 323-325).

and perish). What maintains itself in this flux are the functions of the animal, i.e. its form: respiration, circulation of blood, digestion of food, sexual reproduction.

We are reminded of the ancient example of Theseus' ship, which was kept by the Athenians as a relic of his triumphant return from Crete. Over time, its parts were replaced one by one, until none of the original parts remained.<sup>51</sup> It was a question whether the ship with all new parts was the same ship as the original. There is good reason to hold that even for a body like a ship, the basis of its identity does not lie in its matter. When it comes to a living body however, there can be no doubt: it is the functions which *are* the animal, and the 'parts' may pass away without the animal passing away.

The partisan of mechanism would like to present animal consumption as essentially one body (the animal) with two flat pieces connected by a hinge (i.e. with jaws) crushing another body (the food). However, the animal's consumption of its food is not like the mechanical activity of a trash compactor crushing trash. A trash compactor is a mere extended body which through its local motion displaces another extended body such that the latter is made more and more dense: yet this other body (the trash being condensed) remains other to the compactor (indeed, the enduring otherness is a condition for its effective compaction). An animal however is not simply an extended body: it is an organized system of functions inhering in a body. The animal thus takes in matter (food that is consumed, or air that is breathed) and assimilates it, transforming it into energy for the continuation of its activities, the fulfillment of its functions (or, temporarily transforming it into muscle or fat, so that this organic matter may later be transformed into energy for the fulfillment of the animal's functions).

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<sup>51</sup> Plutarch, *Lives* p.14. See also Plato *Phaedo* 96a-99d, and Aristotle *Metaphysics* Z, 10: 1035b13-23.

It is true that at any given moment the animal is composed of a certain number of cells; and that these cells are indeed ‘material bodies’ in a sense. However, the mere aggregate of these cells is not the animal; and the animal body simply cannot be understood by thus freezing it in one moment of time. This freezing of the animal in an instant would reduce the organized system of functions to a collection of cells, which would under these conditions be understood as mere bits of matter: yet the animal is first and foremost the *life* that maintains itself over time by using these cells up, then taking in more matter, transforming it into new cells, and using those up, and so on. A living body is a *process*, not a mere extended thing, and this must be borne in mind if the living body is to be understood. This process and this life must be understood *teleologically*,<sup>52</sup> and mechanism is precisely the relation and causality that is not teleological. Mechanism is therefore inadequate to understand the living body, even though (as we have said repeatedly) there does remain something merely mechanical about the living body.

Mechanism is inadequate for understanding the living body because life is not a ‘property’ of extended matter: an animal body is not ‘alive’ in the same way that Descartes’ piece of wax is ‘white’ and ‘hard.’ To be sure, ‘white’ and ‘hard’ and other such qualities may be the properties of a living body insofar as it is merely extended, and related to other bodies merely mechanically, but not insofar as it is alive; and life does not belong to a body at all insofar as it is merely extended.

If a mere mouse, as a living body, cannot be understood as simply extension, determined solely by mechanism, then how far is the human being, the ensouled body, from being understood as simply extension, determined solely by mechanism! The

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<sup>52</sup> *EPW* §360A.

human body has not only the functions of life that are shared with animals: the human body also has *human* sensibilities, reason, thought, language, a will! The debates<sup>53</sup> that still rage in analytic philosophy about whether free will is or is not possible if mechanical causality of bodies is admitted will not be resolved until it is understood just how far from adequate mechanism is for understanding the human body, and human capacities like volition. Indeed, as we have seen, not even an animal body—not even the body of a plant!—can be understood as mere mechanism. As if we had to choose whether humans can be free, or the movement of a clock’s gears is determined mechanically! It is nothing short of shocking that anyone at all (to say nothing of philosophers!) could seriously maintain that desires, perceptions, memories (and still less, thoughts and volitions) are the ‘result’ of, and can be reduced to, atoms bombarding each other.

Of course, it does not lie within the scope of this dissertation to give a proper Hegelian response to the issue of mechanical causation of human beings, or to refute materialist conceptions of human beings generally. But I would like to note that any criticism of Hegel that bases itself on a mechanical understanding of the human body and the human being would have to take into account that for Hegel even an animal body would be improperly understood by mere mechanism, and a human body would be still more gravely misunderstood as something simply mechanical.

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<sup>53</sup> See for example A.J. Ayer, “Freedom and Necessity,” Peter van Inwagen, “The Incompatibility of Free Will and Determinism,” Peter Strawson, “Freedom and Resentment,” Gary Watson, “Free Agency,” Daniel C. Dennett, “Mechanism and Responsibility,” John Martin Fischer and Mark Ravizza, *Responsibility and Control*, Robert Nozick, *Philosophical Explanations*, David Velleman, *The Possibility of Practical Reason*, Susan Wolf, *Freedom Within Reason*, Michael Smith, “A Theory of Freedom and Responsibility,” Derk Pereboom, *Living Without Free Will*, David Owens, *Reason Without Freedom*.

*The human body: ensouled, yet still organic, chemical, and mechanical*

Now that we have had an illustration of how a body can transcend mechanism (while yet remaining extended), we are prepared to examine the body of the human being. Just as mechanism is no aid to us in understanding the movement of an animal toward the object of its bestial desire, it is completely useless in trying to understanding a properly human movement.

The human being is, of course, an extended body, susceptible to mechanical movement initiated by other extended objects which strike it with sufficient force, as we have said. Yet the human being is also a chemical body: the epidermis of the human being has a certain chemical composition which is polar in relation to other chemicals in nature. That is, the human body is (as chemical) constantly determined in relation to other chemical bodies in nature, though this relation only becomes apparent when the human body and the other body (in relation to which the human body is chemically polar) come into contact or close proximity.<sup>54</sup> For example, when sulfuric acid ( $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ ) comes into contact with the human body, it bonds with the exposed area of the skin in such a way that new compounds are formed: water, and sulfate. The water that results does not come from nowhere: it is produced from this reaction only through the sudden disappearance of all moisture from the part of the skin exposed to the acid. The disappearance of moisture in skin is part of the reaction by which the chemical composition of that part of the human body is instantaneously altered. A chemical burn is precisely this sudden loss of moisture in a part of the human body.

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<sup>54</sup> *EPW* §§326-327.

Thus even through its chemical nature, the body transcends mechanism.

Chemicals are not indifferent to their relations to other bodies, as (merely) mechanical bodies are. Indeed, chemical bodies are *nothing but* relations to other chemical bodies<sup>55</sup>: a proton is simply a positively charged subatomic particle—i.e. it is wholly defined by its relation to electrons (negatively charged subatomic particles). There is literally nothing in the proton besides this relation. Likewise, more complex structures like atoms and molecules, which can appear stable and substantial, are essentially only the possibility to react with other atoms or molecules of the right kind. Let he who holds the human body to be mere extension, exhausted by mechanical determinations, dip his hand into sulfuric acid! Then we will ask him if his body related to that other body in the way gears in a clock relate to each other: each indifferent to the other, maintaining its own separate identity throughout the relation.

We showed above that an animal is not solely determined mechanically, but we could have just as easily shown that even minerals like salt<sup>56</sup> (or electricity,<sup>57</sup> heat,<sup>58</sup> metals that can be magnetized,<sup>59</sup> etc.) are not strictly mechanical bodies, i.e. they are not merely filled space, which is indifferent to any relations to other bodies. Yet the human being is of course not merely chemical: like plant and animal bodies, the human body is alive. We have already seen that life—while necessarily embodied—is the self-

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<sup>55</sup> *EPW* §326.

<sup>56</sup> *EPW* §332.

<sup>57</sup> *EPW* §§323-325.

<sup>58</sup> *EPW* §§303-307.

<sup>59</sup> *EPW* §§312-314.



preservation of certain functions *at the expense* of the matter: i.e. that this self-preservation is carried out by the destruction of matter through its assimilation to the form of the living body, its energy for continuing its life, its vital functions. The living body is thus not permanently bound to any bit of mere matter: every bit of matter somehow composing the living body (at any given moment) is taken from outside and in time used up (transformed into the energy of the living body, or discarded as waste) in the maintenance of the vital functions. Thus, chemicals are not merely extended bodies; and the attraction of polar chemicals is not the same as mechanical movement. Still less is the living body mere extension; and the movement of an animal in consuming its environment transcends mechanical movement even further than does the movement of chemicals. Yet the human, ensouled body can be understood least of all as mere extension; and the gait of a human being transcends the movement proper to mechanism, chemism, and animal life.

### The selfhood of a body

#### *Discerning the 'self' of a body*

To understand what it is to be an ensouled body we must see that the human is in possession of what the gears of a clock, chemicals, and animals all lack: viz. self-knowledge.<sup>60</sup> To see what self-knowledge means for human beings and the soul's relation to the body, we must first ask what a body's (any body's) 'self' or identity is. Contrasting the different kinds of bodies in this respect will aid us in our investigation. We can tell

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<sup>60</sup> To be sure, the self-knowledge that the human being has in the anthropology (which is our object in this dissertation) is rather primitive compared to the self-knowledge at the culmination of the philosophy of spirit (viz., philosophy itself). Yet as we will see in chapter two, according to their concept, all forms of spirit are forms of self-knowledge.

what a thing is “in-itself” (i.e. what the thing’s self is) by stripping away the inessentials of the thing, and leaving only that which makes the thing what it is. We will examine the different kinds of bodies in succession, beginning with a merely mechanical body, continuing with a merely chemical body, followed by a merely organic body, and concluding with the human body. In our examination of mechanical, chemical, and organic bodies, we will identify what the self or identity of the body plausibly is, and then we will raise objections concerning the claim of such a body to selfhood.

What we say here in anticipation of this investigation can only sound strange, but it will be justified in the investigation to follow. In this investigation we will find that neither the mechanical body, nor the chemical, nor the organic body is in unproblematic possession of its selfhood insofar as what makes the body itself, the principle of its own identity, is something that lies outside of it. In other words, the body’s own self lies outside of it. The body, for its part, ‘strives’ in some sense to reunite with, or to appropriate that other which lies outside of it, yet which makes it what it is (i.e. the body strives to reunite with its own self). (Of course the ‘striving’ here is metaphorical when the body is something without volition). In each case, this attempt is frustrated: the body is unable, for whatever reason, to seize and hold fast its own selfhood. Hence with the exception of the human body, as we will see, there is a sort of tragedy involved in these bodies, insofar as they lose themselves through their very ‘striving’ to secure themselves.

#### *The self of the mechanical body*

Let us turn now to examine the mechanical body with regard to its self. If we disassemble a clock and take one of its gears, we can ask: what *is* this gear? We may first

answer that it *is* grey, hard, and smooth. Yet while these sensible properties inhere in the thing, they are not the thing itself: these are the inessentials that we must strip away to get at the thing itself. The thing itself is what underlies and supports these properties, the substance. In other words, the self of the thing is extension: i.e. the gear's self is the space that it takes up.<sup>61</sup> The extension of the gear (what the gear *is* most fundamentally) is what allows the gear to be what it is in a derivative sense (i.e. to be its predicates: grey, hard, and smooth).<sup>62</sup>

But to take up space means only to be present at different points, i.e. to take up different discrete spaces: thus the self of the gear would be divided into infinitely many selves, as the gear itself can be infinitely divided with respect to space.<sup>63</sup> We may correct ourselves and say that the self of the gear is its precise figure, thus determining it as having certain limits: extending in diameter one inch, being present in this whole inch, but no farther. But to be limited is only to have a relation to that which is *not* oneself. Again, the self of the gear has multiplied: it is 'in,' or it simply *is* these dimensions; but its spatial determination makes its relation to its other (i.e. that which lies beyond its limit) not incidental to its identity, but rather necessarily constitutive of it.

The self of this gear is thus both in these dimensions and outside of these dimensions. The self of the gear must be outside of its own dimensions because the self is the identity of the body, that which makes it what it is; and for a body to have a

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<sup>61</sup> *EPW* §260.

<sup>62</sup> Technically, color, solidity and texture belong to the (higher) sphere of physics rather than mechanics, but let us not press this point.

<sup>63</sup> *EPW* §261.

determinate figure is only for it to be limited by another body, in virtue of which it has such a determinate figure. The selfhood of a mechanical body seems thus to be rooted in its relation to its other.

We said earlier that a merely extended, mechanical body is indifferent to its relations to other bodies, yet now we are saying the opposite. A mechanical body seems to have its selfhood in itself without relation to others only because the concept of mechanism is so inadequate for understanding what things are: once mechanism is subjected to more scrutiny, as we have given it here, it shows itself to be the opposite of how it initially appeared. This change in our understanding of mechanism does not mean however that mechanism is adequate for understanding the human body after all. Rather, it shows that mechanism, taken on its own terms, disagrees with itself and is a valid concept only if we understand it in a qualified way, limited by the subordinate role it plays in a concept that more adequately grasps corporeity.

*The self of the chemical body*

Since chemical bodies explicitly derive their identities from their relations to others<sup>64</sup> (as a proton is simply the contrary of an electron, and a positively charged atom is only the contrary of a negatively charged atom), we can say that chemism represents corporeal selfhood more adequately than mechanism, and thus that mechanism holds of bodies only in a qualified sense, within the confines laid out by the concept of chemism. The chemical body's greater claim to selfhood lies in the fact that chemicals seem to overcome that which holds back merely mechanical bodies from entering on possession of their selfhood. The mechanical body has its selfhood mediated through its other, but it

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<sup>64</sup> *EPW* §326.

is unable ever to appropriate its other and thereby unite with itself: whenever the mechanical body meets its other, the very meeting of the bodies, the contact itself, pushes the other away<sup>65</sup>—that is the tragedy of mechanism.

The chemical, like the mechanical body, is determined by its other (a positively charged ion is nothing but the potential to bond with a negatively charged ion), but the chemical can actually accomplish this union (in bonding with its opposite),<sup>66</sup> and thus seize its selfhood. The proof that the chemical has attained its selfhood is that the compound into which each constituent has been transformed is chemically neutral: positivity and negativity in chemistry only indicate that the atom in question is unstable, i.e. that the positive or negative ion is but one moment, abstracted from the rest of itself (i.e. its opposite). When the (positive or negative) ion bonds with its other, the result is a compound which is not externally determined by the polarity that determined its constituents relative to each other.

However, the neutral compound is only relatively neutral, and therein lies the tragedy of chemism. The ‘neutral’ compound is neutral relative to the two poles that bonded to form it (i.e. it is neutral as a *compound* of its constituents). However, the compound is also a simple chemical body, which relative to *other* chemical bodies remains polar. That is, the ‘neutral’ product, in which each constituent chemical seemed to enter into secure possession of its selfhood, is still itself positive or negative in relation to *another* chemical, with which it is reactive: thus the chemical composition of our skin may seem stable and neutral; but contact with sulfuric acid shows that it was always only

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<sup>65</sup> *EPW* §266.

<sup>66</sup> *EPW* §328.

one side of another possible compound. It is not simply that *one more* bond is necessary in order for the chemical(s) to finally acquire their selfhood: combination and dissolution continues indefinitely on the chemical level, i.e. chemicals will *never* reach a state that is totally stable. Thus whenever the chemical is on the verge of finally attaining its selfhood, it finds itself only with a new kind of polarity, with its selfhood remaining outside of it—that is the tragedy of chemism.

*The self of the animal body*

However, we can find greater stability and a better candidate for selfhood if we look beyond the chemical level altogether to the organic, biological level. The living body is (as we have seen) a system of functions that maintains itself throughout the combination and dissolution of chemicals that is its intercourse with nature (consumption, respiration, etc.).<sup>67</sup> This is the animal's claim to selfhood, which is a greater claim than that of either mechanism or chemism. The animal has a greater claim to selfhood than the chemical because the animal maintains itself in its identity throughout chemical combination and dissolution (which occur constantly within the animal): that is, the animal maintains its possession of itself even as the particular chemical loses itself.

The animal is however not the summit. We have seen that while the animal requires nature to furnish it with certain things (food, air, etc.), the animal does not remain dependent: it takes these objects from outside and transforms them into its own self.<sup>68</sup> To understand why the human being ultimately has the greater claim to selfhood, we would do well to examine closely the process whereby the animal assimilates nature

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<sup>67</sup> *EPW* §§335&A, 336.

<sup>68</sup> *EPW* §364.

to its own self. The part of the process to focus on is the very beginning: the initial appearance of the object to the animal as something external.

After this initial appearance, the animal cancels the apparent externality of the object in its consumption (or respiration), and thus shows that the object was always essentially its own self. However, it remains true that the object initially appeared as external. We are not disputing that the object turns out to be and always was essentially the animal's own self. We are only pointing out that the initial appearance of the object as external is not nothing: it is a positive phenomenon worthy of our attention, and which requires an explanation.<sup>69</sup>

After all, the object is not the animal's own self *simpliciter*: if it were, why would it appear as external—even granting that this appearance is afterwards cancelled by the animal's assimilative activity? The animal itself of course does not ask these questions: it apprehends this external object as somehow essentially itself, but what the animal does not know is that it is itself essentially external. The animal eats its food and breathes its air without realizing this,<sup>70</sup> and thus represses the appearance of its own externality—but the repressed returns in the sexual partner.<sup>71</sup> That is, sex and sexual desire (which are possibilities only for organic bodies—and humans insofar as they are organic) are phenomena that the animal can experience only because its own animal *self* can appear to it as something external—this is precisely what the sexual partner is (an external animal

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<sup>69</sup> For a brief discussion of animal perception see Ludwig Siep, „Leiblichkeit, Selbstgefühl und Personalität in Hegels Philosophie des Geistes“ pp.205-207.

<sup>70</sup> *EPW* §§360, 363.

<sup>71</sup> *EPW* §369.

self). An examination of the phenomena of sex and the accompanying emotions in animals and humans will elucidate the differences between humans and animals.

*The human condition: endurance of the loss of self*

Both the human being and the animal are bodies which are determined from without: i.e. the self of both the human and the animal lies outside of it. One phenomenon in which this externality of self is manifested is in sex, and the accompanying emotions. Sex for both humans and animals involves a feeling of attraction: this feeling is the apprehension on the part of the attracted that his self is outside of him, in another, with which he must unite sexually. To be sure, there are many reasons why the human feeling of love is not the same as animal lust, but let us begin by noting simply that unlike the human being, the animal simply lives its desire unreflectively. Thus the animal experiences the jarring situation of having its self outside of it,<sup>72</sup> but it apprehends this externality of self as something to be immediately overcome (in union with its mate): the animal does not ask itself why its self should appear to it externally in this way, why it should have to factually appropriate what is in fact external but essentially its own self (or, why what is essentially itself should appear external to it at all).<sup>73</sup>

The human on the other hand, apprehends *everything* contained in the phenomenon of sexual desire<sup>74</sup>: the human apprehends that this other is essentially its own self (i.e. the human sees through the apparent difference of the other)—this the

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<sup>72</sup> See for example how animal need (*Bedürfnis*) is experienced (*EPW* §§360-365).

<sup>73</sup> Thus the animal's reaction to seeing its own self appear to it as something external is not wonder or delight—still less is it thought and comprehension—but rather *rage* (*Zorn*) (*EPW* §365A).

<sup>74</sup> The proof for the possibility of this will be given in the chapters to come, beginning with chapter two where we will see that it belongs to the concept of spirit to manifest itself in externality (*EPW* §§381-384).



animal sees as well; but the human *also* sees and understands what the animal does not, viz. that its own self has appeared to it as something other (i.e. the human discerns the fractured state of its own selfhood). All bodies, as we have seen, have their selves outside of themselves, but neither the gears of a clock, nor chemicals, nor beasts *know* this (though beasts do *feel* it). The human being however *knows itself* as something which is other to itself—and it is this knowing which makes it human. In other words, the substance of the human being is subjectivity<sup>75</sup>: the very self of the human being is split such that the human being is other to itself, an object for itself.

It is clear then what distinguishes animal lust from human love. Animal lust is only the animal's sensory experience of another animal accompanied by the dim feeling on the part of the sensing animal that this other is essentially its own self. The animal's appropriation of its 'self' in the act of sex is thus automatic and violent<sup>76</sup>; and after the satisfaction of the desire, no trace remains in the animal's memory of the original jarring encounter of its own self as something external. In love the human likewise knows that this other is essentially his own self. Yet in contrast to animal lust, in human love the human knows very well that this other is not *simply* his own self, that an element of alterity remains even in the blossoming of love and the fulfillment of desire. The human also knows therefore that it cannot simply enter into possession of itself in a way that utterly excludes or eradicates one's own alterity to oneself, precisely because the

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<sup>75</sup> *Subjektivität* is a technical term for Hegel, whose precise meaning we will make clear in chapter two. Here it should suffice to say that subjectivity is not simply the *opposite* of objectivity (i.e. objectivity does not constitute an impassible limit for subjectivity properly speaking). Rather, subjectivity embraces objectivity, its ostensible opposite, mediating its relation to itself through this very opposition.

<sup>76</sup> See *EPW* §363 for Hegel's discussion of the animal's "seizure" of that which satisfies its need, and *EPW* §369 for his discussion of sexual relations.

otherness of the other (which is apprehended in the *feeling* of desire) is (as grasped in *thought*) a reflection of the self's own otherness to itself. Thus the human is able to see its other as its own self in a deeper way: insofar as the self is other to itself, then the otherness of the other is not something that obscures or obstructs the self's identity with the other; rather, the self is revealed to itself not just in the essential identity of the other with the self, but also in the very otherness of the other to the self.<sup>77</sup>

The human's appropriation of himself in his beloved is thus not automatic and brutally cavalier, as it is in the animal. On the contrary, the accomplishment of this union involves the utmost delicacy and nuance. It would be puzzling to an animal why the fulfillment of love should involve such restraint. After all, if my beloved is essentially my own self, then why would I hesitate at all in taking possession of her? The reason that a human is capable of such restraint, and why such restraint is part of what makes a sexual union *human*, is that a human is able to understand the very externality of the appearance of his own self to himself *in its externality*; moreover, the human is able to grasp this externality, this alterity as something yet belonging to his own self.

The animal on the other hand strives immediately and unreflectively to eradicate this externality—and that is precisely why the animal remains subject to death in a way that the human being does not: in destroying the alterity of the other in an attempt to assimilate it to the animal's own self (which is conceived unreflectively by the animal as something simple), the animal, in a very real sense, destroys its own self. That is the tragedy of merely animal life. A human being on the other hand grasps that it is other to itself, that the otherness (which is involved in the appearance of its own self as external to

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<sup>77</sup> See also *System der Sittlichkeit* pp.12-13.

it) is not something alien to itself. Love between humans is therefore tender, because lovers treat each other not as objects to be seized and violently assimilated: this is possible because humans can attend both to the fact that the other is essentially oneself, and to the fact that there remains an element of alterity even in one's relation to oneself.

*The human condition: knowledge of death*

We could express the same point differently by saying that the human being knows death. Bodies have a strange relationship to death: on the one hand, all bodies are mortal (and so must meet with death); yet on the other, the concept of death (as flight from the material world, the pure absence of anything sensible) is beyond the ken of any body as such. When we say that all bodies are mortal, we do not mean that even bodies incapable of life can "die" strictly speaking. We mean only that all bodies are subject to corruption, decay, dissolution, loss of identity. Most basically, to be corporeal means to be extended; and to be extended means only to be divisible,<sup>78</sup> to be capable of being sundered, and 'dying' in that sense. But in a deeper sense, all bodies are subject to 'death' insofar as the body is not in possession of its own self, the principle of its identity. When we say that the concept of death is beyond the ken of any body, we are only echoing Epicurus.

The reader will recall that for materialists like Epicurus, the person is simply a body with no soul, and that consequently for Epicurus "death is nothing to us"<sup>79</sup> insofar as death is the cessation of sensation. Death does not exist for us according to Epicurus,

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<sup>78</sup> *EPW* §247.

<sup>79</sup> Epicurus, "Epicurus to Menoeceus" p.85.

because he would claim that the human being can apprehend only what is positive in phenomena, and not what is negative; only what is present and not what is absent.

Epicurus conceives human beings in much the same way that Hegel conceives animals.

For Hegel, the animal apprehends in its mate only that this other is essentially its own self, but it has no inkling of the *otherness* of the other (or, if the animal does somehow apprehend this otherness, it does not understand it, but feels only *rage* toward it<sup>80</sup>).

Likewise, for Epicurus the human only knows what is sensibly present for it, viz. bodies, and not at all what is not present to the senses.

Yet (and this is how both Plato and Hegel would respond to Epicurus) if there were a body which had a notion of death, a body for whom death was not nothing, then *ipso facto* such a body would not be merely a body: it would be a body with a *soul*. Plato offers a contrast to Epicurus in much the same way that Hegel does. For Plato, death is not simply the destruction of the body, but is the separation of the body and the soul<sup>81</sup>; and philosophy is “practicing death”<sup>82</sup> because philosophy is the soul’s communion with immaterial forms, and thus is the expression of the soul’s independence from the body. Seen in this context, it is clear (as we noted earlier) that Epicurus’ position that death is nothing to us, that it is beyond our capacity to experience the separation of the soul from the body, is nothing short of a denial of the possibility of (Platonic) philosophy. Epicurus

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<sup>80</sup> *EPW* §365A. See also Hegel’s description of the animal’s desire for food in his lectures: “The bird of prey is immersed in desire, and in this desire it has no theoretical relation to the external world, i.e. it makes no difference to [the human being] whether the world continues to exist and is something valuable. [Animal] desire on the other hand is hostile to the existence of the external world, negates it, makes it nothing” (*VPG* p.61).

<sup>81</sup> Plato, *Phaedo*, 64c, 67d.

<sup>82</sup> Plato, *Phaedo* 64a, 67e, 81a.

would deny the possibility of philosophy because philosophy would be *the experience of death*: the experience of the limitations of the body. To experience the limitations of the body is however to transcend these limits (yet as we have seen, this is impossible for Epicurus). Yet it is this experience of death (i.e. the activity of philosophy, self-knowledge) that constitutes the human condition, for Plato, as for Hegel (though they understand this in very different ways).

Moreover, the experience of death (understood in this way as an experience of the limitations of the body) is the same as what we referred to earlier as the endurance of the loss of self. Recall, all bodies are determined from without in different ways, and for that reason are not in possession of that which gives them their identity, i.e. are not in possession of their own selves. Each body however seeks to unite with that which is essentially its own self but factually external in order to be in possession of its own self, or to be the principle of its own identity. To experience the externality of one's self to oneself, and somehow to grasp oneself as self-differentiating in this way, an experience of which humans alone are capable, is precisely to know oneself as beyond one's merely organic body—i.e. it is to know oneself as soul, to initiate the separation of the soul from the body (as an animal organism) and thus to 'practice death' in a sense analogous to the Platonic sense.<sup>83</sup> Epicurus is correct therefore that for a mere body, death would be nothing. A mere body (i.e. a body without a soul, a non-human body) is precisely that

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<sup>83</sup> To be sure, the human soul is still the soul of a human body—but my point is that the human body is not the animal body: the experience of 'practicing death' (understood in the Hegelian way as knowing oneself in the appearance of oneself to oneself as something external) would be proof for Hegel that the one experiencing it transcends the body understood as something merely biological, though there is certainly still a corporeity proper to being human.

which is most subject to death, and least capable of grasping it.<sup>84</sup> It is precisely in experiencing death, in making it ‘something for us’ that we transcend it. Prometheus, the foreknowing son of Iapetos, says “no torment will come unforeseen”<sup>85</sup>; but when it comes to death, the transcendence of the body, knowledge of this torment is what mitigates its power.

*Socrates as an image of the human condition that transcends tragedy*

Let us return now to the image of Atlas mentioned above, the poets’ image of the human condition. Atlas was born from the union of heaven and earth,<sup>86</sup> but condemned in life to be tortured by their separation. We said earlier that Hegel would not have accepted this as an image of the human condition on account of the failure of Atlas to present an integrated picture of the human being. We see the same problem if we look at the fate of Atlas’ unhappy brother, Prometheus: we see that he ends up chained to a rock<sup>87</sup> in Tartaros, which is “a gloomy place in the house of Hades as far from Ge [earth] as Ge is from Ouranos [heaven].”<sup>88</sup> That is, there is a vast chasm between heaven and earth (an unbridgeable gap between the soul and the body), and the place of the human is in a

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<sup>84</sup> Philo tells of a myth according to which animals previously had speech, and thus were like humans. Emboldened by the enjoyment of this privilege, the animals demanded of the gods also to enjoy immortality, whereupon not only did they remain mortal, but they were stricken dumb as well (*De confusione linguarum* §6. See also Callimachus, Iambus II). The rational core of this myth is in the connection between the animal’s lack of speech (because it is not spirit, it has no soul), and its total subjection to death.

<sup>85</sup> Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound* line 102.

<sup>86</sup> Iapetos (father of Prometheus, Epimetheus, Menoitios, and Atlas) was the son of Ouranos (sky, or heaven) Gaia, or Ge (i.e. Earth) (Apollodorus, *Library* 1.1, Hesiod, *Theogony* 134). Hyginus tells of Atlas being born directly from Earth and Ether, the heavenly element (*Fabulae*, “Theogony”).

<sup>87</sup> Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound* lines 5-6.

<sup>88</sup> Apollodorus, *Library* 1.1.

world of torment, incalculably far from both the earthly life of beasts, and the heavenly life of the gods.

We may contrast the image given by the poets with the image given by a philosopher (Plato), as the founding act of philosophy: viz. the death of Socrates. Accepting that Plato and Hegel reach different conclusions (because for Plato the soul is alien to all corporeity while for Hegel there is a specifically human form of corporeity that is appropriate to the soul), it is still worth noting that they bear a certain similarity: viz., in that for both the experience of ‘death’ (the communion with immaterial forms for Plato, and the knowledge of oneself in what is external to oneself for Hegel) signals the emergence of the soul. Thus for Plato the death of Socrates is an image of the ‘death’ of the body and the emergence of the soul: i.e. the human awakening to himself as a soul, transcending his body, while for Hegel the philosophy of spirit (whose first object is the soul) emerges from the philosophy of nature with the death of the animal, spirit’s transcendence of its merely organic body.<sup>89</sup> Based on our foregoing analysis of corporeity and the human body in particular, we may propose this image, the dying Socrates, as what would be for Hegel the true image of the human condition (accepting also that for Hegel it would be an image of the transcendence of the animal body rather than corporeity generally).

We have said that every body has its selfhood outside of it, and tries to transcend its own corporeity in order to appropriate its selfhood. The mechanical body, the chemical body, and the organic body all make this attempt, but all lose their selfhood in their very attempt to appropriate it—thus we said that each of these bodies is tragic. But

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<sup>89</sup> *EPW* §§375-376

in virtue of its soul, the human body escapes the tragic situation of other bodies, just as for Plato, the death of Socrates at first mimics the tragedy of the Greek hero, but ultimately dissolves it.

The reader will recall that Socrates, in service to Apollo, questioned the men of Athens who purported to be wise, and made plain their ignorance (thereby arousing their hatred).<sup>90</sup> He was brought up on charges of impiety and corrupting the young, convicted, and sentenced to death. When it becomes clear that the jury will likely convict him and sentence him to death, Socrates pleads with them to acquit him: not because he fears death, but because he does not want the jurors to mar their own souls (i.e. injure themselves) by doing something unjust.<sup>91</sup> While awaiting execution, Socrates refuses to escape from his prison because escape would be unjust.<sup>92</sup> He accepts his death with equanimity, drinking the poison himself, while comforting his weeping friends, and exhorting them to be brave.<sup>93</sup>

Socrates' situation mimics the situation of the tragic hero insofar as in order to do what is good and right, he must commit a crime: just as Agamemnon must kill his daughter in order to lead his army to war (and avenge the wrong done to his brother),<sup>94</sup> and Clytemnestra must kill her husband in order to avenge her daughter,<sup>95</sup> and Orestes

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<sup>90</sup> Plato, *Apology* 20e-23b.

<sup>91</sup> Plato, *Apology* 30b-d.

<sup>92</sup> Plato, *Crito* 50c-54c.

<sup>93</sup> Plato, *Phaedo* 117b-e.

<sup>94</sup> Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* lines 201-247; Euripides *Iphigenia in Aulis* lines 49-113.

<sup>95</sup> Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* lines 1391-1444.



must kill his mother in order to avenge his father,<sup>96</sup> Socrates must deny what the poets say about the gods (i.e. behave impiously) in order to obey the commandment of Apollo (to practice philosophy). Likewise, just as Achilles must bring death on himself in doing right by avenging his friend Patroclus,<sup>97</sup> Socrates must bring death on himself in doing right by obeying Apollo and practicing philosophy, and in obeying the laws of Athens and not fleeing from his prison cell.

However, the structure of tragedy breaks down in Plato's account of Socrates' death. Socrates is unwavering in his commitment to justice (as are both Antigone and Creon)—yet, unlike the tragic heroes, no harm comes to Socrates. Surely, Socrates *dies*, but he is not harmed.<sup>98</sup> He is not harmed because Socrates proper, Socrates' own *self*, is his soul, not his (merely animal) body, and he is in possession of his soul: indeed, he holds fast to his soul throughout his life, trial, and death. In virtue of the fact that Socrates throughout cares for his soul, the 'harm' that comes to him in the course of his righteous behavior is merely apparent, and the tragedy evaporates.

As we have seen, the human self, the soul, is by its nature an object for itself: it knows itself as other to itself. The separation of the (animal) body and soul—which is at once philosophy and death—in which the soul knows the body as its other, and as its self, is therefore not an experience that is alien to the soul (i.e. it is not “nothing for us”). Socrates is prepared for death, and meets it bravely, because he has lived a *human life*. A human life is precisely a life lived in acknowledgement of and meditation on the

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<sup>96</sup> Aeschylus, *The Libation Bearers* lines 20-21, 275-281.

<sup>97</sup> Homer, *Iliad* XVIII:110-113.

<sup>98</sup> Plato, *Apology* 30c-d.

externality of oneself to oneself. That is, a human life is lived in what is from the perspective of what is merely natural, *death*, the loss of self. All bodies suffer this kind of death, this externality of their selves to themselves: but the human being, the soul, is able to endure this externality to itself.

It is in virtue of his soul that Socrates was able to live justly. Living justly involves doing good to all and harm to none: i.e. it involves treating *others* as one's own self. The animal body recognizes its other as itself; it is even true in a metaphorical sense to say that the chemical body recognizes itself in its other. Yet not only does the human being recognize itself in its other in the sense of seeing through the appearance of otherness, the human being further recognizes that it is other to itself, that its own self is split such that being external to itself (and immediately overcoming this externality by knowing this externality as oneself) is the human condition. The human being knows the objective world as the externality of its own self: far from being alienated from the world, human beings can thus take possession of the world in a way that a mere animal cannot, (for want of the ability to separate itself from the world).

When discussing the animal we were careful to note that the animal as such is not that in its body which is purely material: rather, the animal is the organized system of vital functions which inheres in the body. What then is the human being? We have shown that the human being knows itself. Yet, it is not the case that the human being is a 'self-knowing animal.' That is, the human being is not an animal which is *essentially* the same as any other animal, except with the specific difference that it knows itself, or can know itself. Self-knowledge is not just a capacity of the human being: spirit is not something

the human being *can do*; rather, spirit is *what the human being is*. The human being is not a 'self-knowing animal,' because by being self-knowing the human being proves itself to be not a mere animal, but rather to be spirit. Therefore the self that the human being knows (when it knows itself truly and correctly) is not an animal: it is precisely *spirit*, the self-knowing self.

## CHAPTER TWO: THE CONCEPT OF SPIRIT

### Introduction

In the first chapter we demonstrated that corporeity cannot be understood simply as extension; and that the human being, the ensouled body, can least of all be understood as mere extension. We gave a demonstration how in virtue of its soul, the human being is able to know itself as transcending its body (even as it identifies with its body, knowing this body to be its own). The human being, as we said, is an object for itself: it knows itself as an other, and hence *the human being is able to relate to that which is external to it as to its own self*. In fact, it would be better not to say that the human being is “able” to relate to what is external to it as to its own self, since having one’s own self appear to one as something external and finding one’s own self reflected back by the external world surrounding one is the inexorable human condition: it is not an “ability” which one might occasionally engage in, or perhaps never engage in. We will have an opportunity further in this chapter to examine in detail what is involved in this condition of identifying with (or to finding oneself in) what is external to oneself.

We examined this condition in a preliminary way when in chapter one we contrasted animal lust with human love. We concluded that the human can treat its beloved with tenderness because it knows that as a body its very identity is determined from without, and thus it has its own self outside of it: therefore when its own self

appears to it as something external (in its beloved, the object of its desire), not only does it see through the appearance of externality, knowing the desired object as its own self (this even the animal accomplishes), but also it is able to understand that it belongs to the human being's own essence to appear to itself externally in this way, such that the externality of this appearance is not necessarily apprehended as something disturbing and monstrous for the human being (though it is for the animal<sup>1</sup>).

Insofar as the task of the first chapter was to show that corporeity cannot be understood simply as extension, we had occasion only toward the end of the chapter to discuss the *human* body and the soul. Consequently, our discussion of what is specifically human was brief, and the intricacies of the relation between the soul and the body—and indeed the essence of the soul itself—remain up to this point largely unexamined. In this chapter we will turn our attention more toward what is involved in what is distinctly human: i.e. we will here turn our attention toward *spirit*.

That which is distinctly human *eo ipso* transcends mere nature. While it is true that the human body is extended and determined from without (i.e. while it is true that the human being remains in a certain sense a part of nature), it is equally true that in that which makes him human, the human being is not at all a part of nature; rather, the human being as such is *spirit*. It is terribly difficult to explain what spirit is. For this reason, we must devote no less than an entire chapter to its definition. Due to the severe difficulties

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<sup>1</sup> Recall, the animal also experiences the feeling of need, such that it perceives its own self as something outside of it: e.g. the hungry animal 'knows' in some dim sense that the piece of nature that can nourish it is essentially it (the animal's) own self, though (inexplicably for the animal) this piece of food at that moment exists outside of it with a semblance of independence from the animal. It is because the animal has not even the beginnings of an understanding of why what is essentially only its own self should appear to it as something external, with a semblance of independence, that it reacts to this appearance not with wonder or comprehension, but only *rage*, and the destruction (e.g. through consumption) of the object (*EPW* §365A).

that cannot be avoided in the task we have set ourselves here, we must proceed carefully. Accordingly, in the first part of this chapter we will eschew technical terminology and limit ourselves to a description of the way the soul can relate to its body. This description will be ‘phenomenological’ insofar as we will be concerned only with describing different psycho-physical phenomena (i.e. phenomena concerning the soul-body relation). Only later, after this description has given us some familiarity with our theme, will we move beyond the phenomena as such to examine the underlying ontological structures operative in them. Before we get to this ‘phenomenological’ description, let us briefly recapitulate chapter one, and give a more detailed preview of what will follow.

*A brief recapitulation of chapter one: that non-human bodies are not in possession of their own selves, i.e. the principles of their identities*

We saw in chapter one that there are grave inadequacies in the common sense understanding of the identity of a body. To clear up these misunderstandings, we examined in succession the nature of mechanical bodies (bodies determined solely by extension), chemical bodies (bodies determined by polarity, i.e. defined explicitly by their relation to other bodies), and organic or living ‘bodies’ (systems of biological processes in which inorganic nature is taken in and transformed into energy for the continuation of these very processes). Over the course of this investigation we saw just how abstract and inadequate the common sense attitude toward bodies is (viz. the opinion that a certain body is quite simply itself, and it is what it is without necessary relation to anything else).

The ostensible independence of a body seems most evident in a physical object with clearly defined boundaries (i.e. an object determined only mechanically). However, upon close examination we can see (as we did in the previous chapter) that the very principles of such a body's ostensible independence (viz. its boundaries) are in truth nothing but relations to *other* bodies.<sup>2</sup> Chemical bodies have a greater claim to independence insofar as they do not simply reach out to that which determines their identity as merely mechanical bodies do, only to be repelled on contact: rather, the chemical can *bond* with its opposite (which determined its identity), transforming itself and its opposite into a *neutral* substance.<sup>3</sup>

However, it is impossible for a chemical to achieve *absolute* neutrality: every 'neutral' substance is always really polar relative to *another* chemical which determines it (i.e. *not* neutral).<sup>4</sup> Since in combination a chemical fails to enter on possession of itself (becoming not neutral, but instead only polar relative to *another* chemical), we could say (were we to speak metaphorically) that even in its bonding, the chemical sees its own self recede from its grasp at the very moment when it would take possession of it. Indeed, such independence is impossible on the chemical level: i.e. on a chemical level a body simply cannot *be itself*. However, the animal is neither a mechanical object nor a chemical: it is an organized set of functions or activities (e.g. consumption, digestion,

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<sup>2</sup> EPW §261.

<sup>3</sup> EPW §§326-329.

<sup>4</sup> EPW §326.

respiration, etc.) which maintain themselves throughout the combination and dissolution of chemicals.<sup>5</sup>

Truly, the animal body is marvelous in its *life*, its organic transcendence of chemical relations. However, the animal too remains determined by an opposition, and to that extent it remains merely natural. The animal has the sophistication to *feel* that (in certain cases) what appears external to it is in truth its own self. Yet, unable to *comprehend* this externality as a consequence of the concept of nature and hence the inescapable fate of all corporeity (at least insofar as it is corporeal), the animal tries to destroy the appearance of externality<sup>6</sup>; in other words, the animal attempts to continue to exist in a merely *natural*, corporeal state, but to have no opposite. However, the animal's destruction of the appearance of itself to itself as something external (in consumption for example) does not alter its essence as a living thing (its dependence on inorganic nature as the material on which its vital processes work). Even life is not independent of dead nature, but rather remains determined by this opposition.

The human being on the other hand is not *merely* a living being, and thus does not remain determined by the opposition between organic life and death. Thus the human being knows not only that as natural and corporeal it will have its own self (the principle of its identity) outside of it (e.g. as object of desire, which it must appropriate), but also that it belongs to the very nature of the human self to appear to itself externally in this way. Therefore for the human being, externality (and the appearance of the human being's own 'self' to it as external) is not something that must be destroyed. In other

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<sup>5</sup> EPW §337.

<sup>6</sup> EPW §365A.



words, the human being can bear the *infinite pain*<sup>7</sup> of losing itself in externality; and by enduring this pain, the human being regains itself. For the human being, finding itself outside of itself, in another, is not death; or, if it is death, then this death is not the human being's annihilation. Rather, it is life: specifically, it is the life of *spirit*, which is different from the life of mere nature for the reasons which we have intimated here, and on which we will elaborate further in what follows.

*A preview of the first part of chapter two*

The first part of this chapter will be occupied with giving various concrete examples to illustrate the way a human being 'appears to itself as something external.' We will draw on history, literature, mythology, psychology, and politics to provide these examples. The reader may judge that some of these examples are better than others; and I admit that none of the examples which will follow gives a completely clear and unambiguous image of spirit. This inadequacy is inevitable: there is likely no single concrete event, experience, or anecdote whose textual description presents spirit in its concept in a way that is completely clear. Accordingly, the Hegel expert will find something inadequate about each of these examples: but that is because the Hegel expert is *already* familiar with the concept of spirit, and would prefer to proceed directly to the deep analysis of *Encyclopedia* §§381-384 (which will occupy the second half of this chapter). My aim however is to present the material in such a way that is comprehensible even to the non-specialist: the non-specialist stands to benefit from the presentation of these images before the analysis of the concept of spirit (though after this analysis this non-specialist too would no doubt retrospectively find flaws in the examples I will give).

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<sup>7</sup> This is a technical term of Hegel's. We will explain it at length later in this chapter.

I have therefore elected to provide such a wide range of examples because it suits my purpose *at this stage* of the dissertation: viz. to give my imagined non-specialist reader a familiarity with the structure of spirit before embarking on a thorough study of the concept of spirit presented in §§381-384.

We will proceed according to the following schema

(1) **Property**: first we will give property as an illustration of spirit that contains all of its moments, but for the sake of simplicity, in this initial example we will not isolate and explain these nuances separately. This first illustration of spirit is appropriate as an introduction because it comes from Hegel himself, and concerns a familiar phenomenon.

(2) **Natural pity**: After this example we will be in a better position to isolate the different nuances of spirit: accordingly, we will then take some examples of “natural pity” from Rousseau’s writings. Our presentation here will illustrate one aspect of spirit (the human being’s identification with externality) apart from other aspects (such as the human being’s awareness of itself as something distinct from externality).

(3) **The ages of life (childhood and adolescence)**: Once we have been made aware of the aspects of spirit and their differences, we can turn to a phenomenon which illustrates these different nuances, but does so separately: the ages of a human life, in which the different aspects of spirit emerge in temporal succession. We will limit ourselves here to the examination of the human being’s immediate

identification with externality, and the conscious emergence for the human being of its distinction from the world around it.

(4) **Subjectivity:** In the course of the foregoing illustration we will refer to the human being's "subjectivity," which is a technical term for Hegel. The discussion of the ages of life will be followed therefore by a brief interlude to explain the meaning Hegel gives to "subjectivity." After this explanation we will be prepared for examples that show spirit in more depth, proceeding beyond the two previously examined moments of spirit (the human being's immediate identification with externality and its awareness of a difference between itself and externality) to show their unity.

(5) **Absolute self-realization:** Accordingly, we will begin to speak of "absolute self-realization," which I will show is the very essence of spirit, uniting the two aspects previously examined separately. Several examples will be given of spirit highlighting its 'absolutely self-realizing' character.

(6) **The ages of life (maturity):** Finally, we will be in a position to examine the culmination of the human life in maturity, the stage which unites the aspects of spirit that separately dominate the two previous stages. In maturity we have a phenomenon that illustrates spirit's absolutely self-realizing character. After one final example to further drive home what we have seen, we will move on to the task which will occupy us in the second part of this chapter: viz. a close reading of Hegel's presentation of the concept of spirit in §§381-384.

A phenomenological description of the way the human soul relates to its body

*A preliminary definition of human nature: knowing oneself in externality, as illustrated in the example of property*

We can characterize the human being in a preliminary way by saying that the human being knows itself in what is external to it: the human being knows that the externality of this appearance does not threaten to destroy it; and thus also the human being knows that he need not eradicate the externality of this appearance. Indeed, far from reacting to the appearance of itself as external with horror and fury, as the animal does, the human being characteristically *strives* to appear thus external to itself, i.e. to *realize itself* in externality. However, we must here add the following caveat: though it is human nature to appear to oneself in externality and to know this external appearance—even in its externality—as belonging to oneself, this does not mean that the human being must always consciously or willfully identify with or see itself in what lies outside of it. Much of this identification may be ‘unconscious’ in the sense that the person need not even be aware that it is going on. It might be more accurate however to call it ‘pre-conscious’ rather than ‘unconscious,’ since ‘unconscious’ may connote suppression or absence of consciousness, which should not be assumed here.

Before giving my own examples, we can give one from Hegel himself<sup>8</sup>: the realization of a human being’s will in its property. Hegel says:

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<sup>8</sup> That is, we can here give a *second* example from Hegel: the example from chapter one (which we recapitulated at the beginning of this chapter as well), viz. the contrast between the animal and the human experience of desire, also comes from Hegel. The animal’s experience of desire comes directly out of the philosophy of nature (especially *EPW* §§359-365 & 369). The human, spiritual experience of loving desire that I have given does not come directly from Hegel’s text: it can be found nearly everywhere in some form, but nowhere is it treated at satisfactory length. My account is therefore largely the product of an imaginative reconstruction drawing from several parts of the philosophy of spirit (e.g. *EPW* §§381-384 on

That I have mere external power over something, making of it my possession, just as if I make something mine in particular circumstances out of natural need, impulse, or fancy, belongs to the particular interest of possession. But that I, as free will, should be [something] objective in my possession, and only thereby becoming an actual will—this constitutes the true and rightful definition of *property*.<sup>9</sup>

Property is therefore distinct from mere possession: I can possess something without it being my property, just as something can be my property without me being in possession of it. The difference between property and a mere possession is that my property is an object in which my will is invested, i.e. an object which reflects my own self back to me, the appearance of myself to myself as something external.

Whether anything at all in fact belongs to me is not the issue: all that we must show here is that an external object can reflect my own will back to me—whether I have legal title to this object or not. A part of the material world which most of all seems to reflect myself back to me is my own home, my apartment. I have spent countless hours in my apartment; and it is I who have decided how the various objects it contains will be arranged—but these alone would not render the apartment the objectification of my will. What makes the apartment my will is that I experience it as an extension of myself<sup>10</sup>: the proof for this lies not so much in anything positive, but rather in the fact that most of the time I do not experience my apartment as something *objective* (standing against me,

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the concept of spirit, §397 on the sexual relation, §§407-410 on self-feeling and habit, §§426-429 on desire in self-consciousness, §§518-522 on the family).

<sup>9</sup> *GPR* §45

<sup>10</sup> My own body is perhaps an even better example of an external object which an extension of myself, and from which I rarely even distinguish myself. Hegel touches on the extent to which my body can be considered my property (*GPR* §§47-48). See also Ludwig Siep's worthy investigation into this topic („Leiblichkeit, Selbstgefühl und Personalität in Hegels Philosophie des Geistes“ pp.203-226).

unfamiliar, resisting my will) or positive at all.<sup>11</sup> Instead, I move through it easily, without having to consciously think about what I am doing or where I am going.

The experience of one's home as invested with one's own will is so familiar to everyone, that it can perhaps be better clarified by noting how unusual it would be if my apartment were *not* to present itself to me as a mere extension of myself. I have heard that when the victim of a burglary returns home and finds his house ransacked, the most disturbing thing is not the expense of replacing any stolen items: rather, it is the feeling of having been *violated*, of having one's own home (an extension of one's own self) invaded by someone uninvited. I have never been burglarized, but I several years ago my home was invaded by a few mice, and this was enough to alter the way I experienced my home. Previously a place in which I could move around without thought or attention, my apartment now became something suspicious to me. While previously I had for a long time dispensed with any immediate perception of the various parts of my home, relying rather on compound representations built up in my mind habitually, now I began to look again as if for the first time at my apartment, searching every nook and cranny for signs of mice.

Thus what makes something my property is if I interact with it with such a degree of familiarity that habitual representations replace immediate perceptions, and I am able to manipulate the object in the way I want to while my mind is occupied with something else. This sort of experience of an object is possible only because although a human being is spatially confined to the limits of its body, there is another dimension to human

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<sup>11</sup> To the extent that I have understood Heidegger, he seems to make much of this phenomenon (see for example *Sein und Zeit* §15, pp66-72).

experience that allows human subjectivity to be spread throughout the whole environment of the human being. The proof that property is something real is not in the piece of property insofar as it is extended, or has a certain chemical composition; indeed, it is not in the object taken alone at all. Rather, the proof lies in the ability of the human being to experience its world as its own.

*Rousseau and natural pity: an example of knowing oneself in externality that does not involve awareness of one's distinction from externality*

As I mentioned above, the rest of these examples will be of my own selection: Hegel does not mention these. The *legitimacy* of these examples depends therefore only on whether they can be seen as concretions of the concept of spirit (which will be presented in the second part of this chapter)—I think that they can. The *utility* of these examples, and the *appropriateness* of their placement at this part of the dissertation lie in their merit in giving the non-specialist sufficient familiarity with what spirit is to make comprehensible the subsequent analysis of Hegel's presentation of the concept of spirit (in *Encyclopedia* §§381-384).

I will begin by offering an example of spirit in its immediate condition: that is, spirit which sees itself reflected in its object, without however knowing itself as in any way distinct from this object. Much of the anthropology concerns spirit in this condition of immediacy, so it is appropriate that we become familiar with it now. However, we should make clear at the beginning that it is the nature of spirit *not only*: (1) to know itself in the appearance of itself to itself as external; but *also* (2) to know itself as in some sense distinct from everything external (and so not simply identical with any of it). The first

example I will provide here will show spirit in the first aspect, but not in the second.

Again, it is appropriate to examine spirit in this immediate state, immersed in its object, because, first, spirit in this condition is a major part of the anthropology and hence a major concern of this dissertation, and second, by beginning with spirit in its immediacy and only subsequently moving on to examples that show spirit in its more developed state, we will be better able to discern the different nuances of spirit. Let us turn then to this example of spirit knowing itself in its object but failing to know itself as distinct from its object: the example is the “natural man” that Rousseau describes for us in his *Discours sur l’origine et les fondements de l’inégalité parmi les hommes*.

In Rousseau’s “natural man” (the man never exposed to the corrupting influences of “civilization” and all it entails) the power of the human being to find itself in externality shows itself to be unlimited: the self of the human being in its natural state is, according to Rousseau, unreflectively spread out over its whole environment, its whole world, with no cognizance on the part of the natural man of any difference between its own body and the various other bodies, animate and inanimate, which surround it.<sup>12</sup> Accordingly, for Rousseau, pity is natural for the human being: i.e. it belongs to the nature of the human being to pre-reflectively and spontaneously identify with other sensible creatures (or rather, it belongs to the nature of the human being fail to distinguish

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<sup>12</sup> We may suspend judgment about whether this phenomenon is probable. In the second *Discours* Rousseau is not describing a condition of human beings that is temporally prior to their present (civilized, corrupted) state. Rather, he is presenting what he considers to be a certain essential characteristic of human beings. Analogously, extension is essential to bodies, and in geometry’s investigation into this essential characteristic, it presents abstractions like points, lines and planes. The fact that we do not experience points, lines, or planes as such, but always only imperfectly represented as moments of a concrete object, does not invalidate the geometrical investigation into their essences.



itself from other sensible creatures).<sup>13</sup> Consequently, the human being is naturally repulsed at the sight of another suffering: the repulsion here is due to the fact that the human being perceives and experiences the suffering of the other as if it were he himself who were suffering. Elsewhere Rousseau says: “[Even] the most perverse are unable to lose this inclination entirely. Often it puts them in contradiction with themselves. The thief who robs passers-by still covers the nakedness of the poor, and the most ferocious murderer still supports a fainting man.”<sup>14</sup>

The man who reflectively plans and carries out the foul murder of his own brother, but who spontaneously thrusts out his arms to prevent a fainting stranger from injury displays (in the latter action) the pre-conscious identification with others in a way with clear relevance for ethics. But this unreflective identification with externality need not be of a sort with such clear ethical implications: it might rather simply be a matter of being transported into an ecstatic, mystical union with nature. Rousseau gives an example of this kind of pre-conscious identification with externality in the last work he published, *Les Réveries du promeneur solitaire*. In the second *promenade* of that work Rousseau describes his experience of the moments immediately after he regained consciousness after being knocked over by a large dog and sustaining serious injuries:

It was nearly night when I regained consciousness. I found myself in the arms of three or four young men who told me what had just happened to me. The Great Dane, unable to stop in its tracks, collided with my legs and from its mass and speed, it caused me to fall forward on my head: my upper jaw, bearing the weight of my whole body, had struck the very

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<sup>13</sup> *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* pp.125-6. See also *Émile* tome premier pp.370-373.

<sup>14</sup> *Émile* tome deuxième p.57. My translation.

rocky pavement, and the fall was even more violent as I was facing downhill and my head ended up lower than my feet.

The carriage to which the dog belonged followed immediately and would have run over my body if the driver had not restrained his horses at just that moment. Such is what I learned from those who picked me up and who still held me up while I returned to myself. The state I was in at that instant is too singular not to give a description here.

Night was approaching. I saw the sky, some stars, and some leaves. This first sensation was a moment of delight. I felt nothing else. At that moment I was born into life, and it seemed to me that all the objects that I perceived were filled with my fragile existence. Absorbed in the present moment, I remembered nothing. I had no clear notion of my individuality; not the slightest idea of what had just happened to me; I knew neither who, nor where I was; I felt neither pain, nor fear, nor anxiety. I watched my blood flow as I would have watched a stream, without thinking that the blood belonged to me in any way. I felt in my whole being such a terrific calm that each time I recall it, I find nothing comparable in all of the pleasures that we know and engage in.<sup>15</sup>

The sympathy Rousseau describes when he says “it seemed to me that all the objects that I perceived were filled with my fragile existence” is essentially the same as the natural pity of the savage, and the spontaneous kindness displayed even by the murderer: it is a pre-conscious identification with the objects of one’s experience, such that one does not distinguish between subject and object. This kind of sympathy is therefore quite different from the sympathy that moralists demand that we feel, and that we may consciously will ourselves into feeling. Rousseau’s natural sympathy is not a feeling which may be chosen or affirmed because it cannot even be thematized (without at once ceasing to be natural). Once reflection (my distinction of myself from others, my awareness of myself as distinct) becomes possible, then sympathy for Rousseau is artificial: the commandment to be sympathetic is then received as an onerous obligation,

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<sup>15</sup> *Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire* pp.1004-5. My translation.

and is obeyed only reluctantly and with resentment, or willingly but only for the insidious and unsympathetic purpose of currying favor and manipulating others.<sup>16</sup>

For Rousseau (at least in the second *Discours*), reflection or awareness of oneself as an individual is the root of all evil, and the irreversible cause of the miserable state of human beings.<sup>17</sup> For Hegel on the other hand, the disturbance introduced by such reflection is not the irremediable loss of human freedom and happiness. Indeed, for Hegel, the human being's awareness of himself as different from others is a necessary part of being human (i.e. this distinction is a necessary part of spirit), and is not to be lamented.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, for Hegel this awareness of oneself as a distinct individual does not hinder one's identification with what is outside of oneself—in fact, such distinction *makes possible* the kind of identification with externality that Hegel considers distinctively spiritual, distinctively human.

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<sup>16</sup> Rousseau describes an example of this at the beginning of the sixth *promenade*. He was in the habit of passing a corner in Paris where a certain woman sold fruit. The woman's son was always with her, and the young boy took to complimenting M. Rousseau each time he passed and asking for a bit of money. At first, Rousseau gave some money and was happy to do so. Yet as time went on, the boy came to take Rousseau's generosity as a matter of course, and what was once an act based on his own generous sentiment became for Rousseau an obligation which ran counter to his sentiments (*Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire*, pp.1050-1). See also *Émile*: "How could one make a duty of the most tender caresses, and a right of the sweetest proofs of love?" (tome deuxième, p.406).

<sup>17</sup> Of course, *Du Contrat social* is a sustained argument that the alienation of humans from each other, which characterizes "civilized man" in the second *Discours*, is not the only shape that civilization can take. The 'civilization' described in the second *Discours* is thus only a half-civilization, which because it is not complete is worse than natural savagery. It is best therefore to have *total* civilization, *total* cultivation. One might say then that the sword that wounds (reflection, self-consciousness) is also the sword that heals. When one takes Rousseau's works as a whole, he is not so different from Hegel: "It is thinking that both inflicts the wound, and heals it again" (Hegel, *EPW* §24Z #3); "Sin is knowing good and evil as separation; yet this knowing likewise heals the old wound and is the source of infinite reconciliation" (Hegel, *VPGes* p.391).

<sup>18</sup> "We can hold such a barbaric state as something lofty, and thereby fall into the error of Rousseau, who presented the condition of the savage Americans as the one in which man was in possession of his true freedom. To be sure, the savage is utterly ignorant of much that is unhappy and painful, yet that is only negative, while freedom must be essentially positive" (*VPGes* p.419).

For Hegel therefore, the unreflective dispersal of the self that Rousseau describes as the nature of the human being is indeed *human*, but primitively so: i.e. this unreflective identification of subject and object belongs to the concept of spirit, but it alone does not adequately express this concept. To put it differently, while this unreflective identification is a capacity of the human being and thus does in some way represent human nature, it does not represent humanity at its most developed.

To be sure, in its most developed state the human being is neither alienated from nor indifferent to its world. Rather, the human being remains *always* invested in externality, it always in some way finds itself in the objective world confronting it; but unlike Rousseau's natural man, it does not remain undifferentiated from the world, failing to attain awareness of its individuality because of its total and—let us be frank—*bestial* absorption in the world. For Hegel, it is human nature to know oneself in externality, to find one's own self in the world one experiences outside oneself. Yet, for Hegel this identification is based on a prior differentiation; and only then is it spirit in the deepest sense. It remains no doubt unclear how such an identification based on a differentiation is possible: in other words, it remains unclear how spirit is possible. To aid in our clarification of spirit, let us take a certain phenomenon in which the different nuances of the structure of spirit are manifested serially: the individual human being's stages of life.

*The stages of life: infancy/childhood and adolescence*

Hegel discusses the stages of life in the anthropology.<sup>19</sup> We will have an opportunity to examine his treatment of this phenomenon more closely in chapter four, when we begin our detailed exposition of the anthropology itself. Here, as our purpose is

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<sup>19</sup> Hegel, *EPW* §396&Z.

only to explain spirit as such, let us simplify the stages of life into three stages: infancy/childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. In each stage, we will examine how the human being experiences the world around it, to what extent the human being identifies with its world and to what extent it differentiates himself from this world. However, in this section we will only consider the first two stages, leaving adulthood for consideration a bit later, after we have made some other points necessary to understanding the full flowering of spirit which adulthood illustrates.

The infant is a human being who has not yet attained knowledge of itself as something distinct from the objects around it; instead, it is totally absorbed in (what are for us<sup>20</sup>) the objects of its experience, unable to distinguish itself from another (and by “another” we mean anything at all which is not the infant itself). Therefore though the infant might still have some awareness of its environment, it does not apprehend this

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<sup>20</sup> I must acknowledge here that the term “for us” has a meaning in the Jena *Phenomenology* where it refers to a difference in perspective that is necessarily confined to the phenomenological introduction to the *Encyclopedia*, and cannot be contained in the system itself. However, It is a fact that Hegel does use this locution many times in the *Encyclopedia*. The locution “für uns” or some variant thereof (e.g. “für unser Denken,” “für unser Erkennen,” “für unser praktisches Verhalten,” etc.) can be found in the main text of the *Encyclopedia* in the Preface to the second edition as well as in §§381, 398, and 470; it can be found in the *Anmerkungen* to §§60, 162, 195, 204, 387, 459, 464; in the *Zusätze* it can be found in §§36, 42 (#3), 45 (three times), 115, 124, 163, 246 (twice), 247, 275, 314, 317, 330, 331, 369, 386, 387, 392, 399 (three times), 401, 402 (twice), 417, 424, 452 (twice), and 469. Additionally, when he uses this locution, it is clear that he is making a distinction in some sense between two perspectives. To consider a few examples: “Spirit has *for us* nature as its *presupposition*, whose *truth* and thus whose *absolute first* it is”(EPW §381); “Waking is not only *for us* or externally distinct from sleep; it is itself the *judgment* of the individual soul, whose being-for-itself is, for it, the relation of its determination to its being, the distinguishing of itself from its still undifferentiated universality”(EPW §398); “Practical spirit contains [...] a double-ought. [...] [viz. there is the distinction between practical spirit and the outside world which ought to conform to it, and there is also the distinction between practical spirit’s own inner immediacy and the universality which ought to characterize its form. The latter distinction however is] a distinction which is at first only for us”(EPW §470). Admittedly, the distinction in perspective here cannot be the same as it is in the Jena *Phenomenology*, but there is still a distinction between what has been posited at a certain stage and what will later become posited. Thus Hegel refers (in §§381 and 470) to what is clear “for us” though it has not yet been explicitly posited, and he notes (in §398) that it is not only “for us” that there is a certain distinction, but for the concretion of spirit under examination: he does this for heuristic reasons, to foreshadow steps that will come so that the reader will better comprehend them when they are presented later. I will use the term in this dissertation in the same way.

environment as *its own* environment (or indeed as an environment at all), because it does not realize that it is at the center—indeed, the infant does not realize that it is at all.

In Freudian psychology this phenomenon (viz. the infant's failure to distinguish itself from its environment) is called "symbiosis."<sup>21</sup> In other words, the infant's life (*bios*) does not belong to the infant itself, or at least is not its firm possession. Instead, the infant's life is (for it) spread out over everything he experiences: that is, the infant has its life or its self only together (*syn*) with the whole of its environment. The infant at this stage might see colors and feel textures, but it does not realize that it is something different from these colors and textures. Insofar as it fails to distinguish itself from these colors and textures, the infant is pre-reflexively identified with them (i.e. they 'seem to be filled with' the infant's 'fragile existence'). Of course, implicitly the colors and textures making up its environment are different not only from the infant, but from each other: black is not white, smooth is not rough—and still less is black smooth or white rough; and since the infant is identified with *all* of its perceptions, it would be, according to its own experience, *different from itself*. The experience of such a 'contradiction' (that it 'is' both white and not white) might be jarring enough to prompt the infant to take itself as an object: i.e. the experience of such a contradiction might be enough to propel the infant out of the state of symbiosis, of total sympathetic immersion in its environment.

However, so long as the infant remains an infant (or perhaps even as long as it remains a child), it lacks awareness of its own self as something separate from the world. Accordingly, the infant simply lies in its crib with eyes wide open, eagerly taking in

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<sup>21</sup> Margaret Mahler, *On Human Symbiosis and the Vicissitudes of Individuation* pp.7-13; and Margaret Mahler, *The Psychological Birth of the Human Infant: Symbiosis and Individuation* pp.41-51. See also Freud, "Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning" pp.213-226).

impressions of the world. To be sure, *for the infant* these are not ‘impressions’ *per se*, since the concept of an impression already contains within it the concept of a perceptive self (a self which is distinct from objects, yet affected by them); and the infant lacks precisely this concept. This infantile self is (*for us*<sup>22</sup>) in possession of impressions (which are neither the subject itself nor the object itself, but rather the presence of the object ‘in’ the subject). However, for the infant to become aware of itself it would have to turn away from all of the things composing the world that it experiences, and focus instead on its own subjectivity—i.e. the infant would have to transform itself by distinguishing its own self from the world of objects, knowing itself in this distinction.<sup>23</sup>

By thus turning away from the objects of its experience (thereby for the first time experiencing them as *objects*), the infant makes a distinction that brings *itself* into relief (as something other than these objects) as well. The making of this distinction signals a monumental change in the infant, insofar as it is no longer simply directed outward, with his selfhood dispersed in the world of objects; yet nor does the infant simply turn inward and lose all contact with objectivity. Rather, once the infant begins to know itself as a self, it is not necessarily *merely* directed outward, but can be always also reflected inward into itself; by the same token, the self-aware infant is not necessarily solely directed inward, but can be also directed outward, toward objects. The process by which the infant becomes aware of itself as something limited and opposed to other objects is called

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<sup>22</sup> See p.71n for a remark on the use of the locution “for us.”

<sup>23</sup> This distinction is the one that for Rousseau in the second *Discours* corrupts human nature. For Hegel however, it is a necessary moment in the full expression and flourishing of human nature, as we will see. Using the stages of life as a metaphor, this full flourishing is seen in adulthood, and neither in infancy nor adolescence.

“separation” or “individuation,” in Freudian psychology, and this process signals the end of symbiosis.<sup>24</sup> Likewise, for Rousseau “it is at this [...] stage that the life of the individual really begins, [namely,] when he gains consciousness of himself.”<sup>25</sup>

The infant (as thus self-aware) no longer loses itself in the objective world, but rather for the first time finds the objective world before it as something *objective*, resisting its subjectivity and throwing the infant back upon itself. Objects then present an aspect of otherness to the self which prompts the self to recall that it too has an independence, and resists penetration by (what it now knows to be) *other* objects. Of course, the resistance that the subject has *as subject* is not the same as the resistance that one’s own body (insofar as it is merely extended) has to other bodies. The resistance displayed by the subject as such is not a natural, mechanical resistance (such as one billiard ball displays toward another), but a spiritual resistance: it is the ability to withdraw into oneself and shield oneself (as soul) from external affection. This spiritual resistance is not developed to any significant extent until adolescence: thus the mere child retains the susceptibility to be transported at any moment in fits of unbridled elation, rage, terror, and despair (so little has he separated himself from what he experiences), while the adolescent for his part typically feels melancholy and alienated from the world. The adolescent knows that he is distinct from the world, not only physically as one material body is spatially distinct from other material bodies (awareness of this is

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<sup>24</sup> Mahler, *The Psychological Birth of the Human Infant: Symbiosis and Individuation* pp.52-120; Mahler, *On Human Symbiosis and the Vicissitudes of Individuation* pp.14-30.

<sup>25</sup> *Émile* tome premier, p.100. My translation.



achieved much earlier<sup>26</sup>), but also in properly human ways, e.g. *socially*. For example, the adolescent may feel alienated from his culture, from the conventions of his time and place. Yet despite the adolescent's awareness of himself as so distinct, he still does not know what or who he is: to know that, he must continue turning inward. Let us try to replicate in broad strokes how such soul-searching might take place.

The adolescent looks into himself with the intention of discovering his own self, focusing his attention on it. When he does this, he may at first be disappointed because all that he is able to focus his attention on is for him an *object*. Yet he is not an object, but rather a subject. He turned inward with the intention of capturing himself in his purest subjectivity—yet in doing so, he immediately transformed himself into an object. However, what Hegel would have us understand here is that the adolescent in our example has not *failed* to grasp adequately his subjectivity when he finds it to be something *objective*, something *other* to himself. Rather, in objectifying himself (turning inward and making his own abstract subjectivity into an object for himself), he has successfully glimpsed the very essence of subjectivity: subjectivity is other to itself, it differentiates itself from itself and immediately sublates this distinction. That is, subjectivity (as Hegel means it) is not something opposed to and limited by an object; rather, subjectivity is at once subject and object.

### *Spirit and subjectivity*

Let us recapitulate what the foregoing examples have taught us about what it is to be human, or “spirit.” We can see first of all that being human involves making a

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<sup>26</sup> Typically the infant-toddler achieves this level of individuation by sixteen months (Mahler, *On Human Symbiosis and the Vicissitudes of Individuation* p.17).

monumental distinction, in which the self's abstract subjectivity is placed in opposition to the entire objective world (which includes quite literally everything which can be an object for the self, everything toward which the abstract subject can direct itself knowingly).<sup>27</sup> Second, we can see that what seem to be two sorts of relationship emerge: the relation between the self and external objects; and the relation of the self to itself.

Yet, when examined more closely, these two sorts of relationships are hard to distinguish: their similarity lies in the fact that the second relationship, the relation of the self to itself, is *also* a case of the self relating to what is for it *an object*. This is due to the fact that when the self turns inward, it makes its own self into an object for itself. On the one hand, even as we admit that the self relates to itself as to an object, we must recognize that this 'objective self' is not the same as other objects (because even though it is an object, it remains the self itself, and the relation that the self has to itself is one of *identification*). Yet on the other hand, in a certain sense, this 'objective self' is not so different from other objects, since it is the fate of the human being to identify with external objects, to have his own self caught up in the world he experiences. The entire mystery of spirit is contained in this conundrum: the self relates to itself as to another, but even though this other is an other, it is the self itself; the self is only able to relate to itself at all—only able to identify with itself—by distinguishing itself from objects; and the self's identification with itself is a matter of the self *objectifying itself* (taking itself as its *object*) and then identifying with what is for it an object.

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<sup>27</sup> We must call this the *abstract* subject because "subject" and "subjectivity" for Hegel can also mean—indeed, it properly refers to—that which encompasses *both* sides of this distinction. This will be explained below.

That it is even *possible* to make the distinction between the abstract subject and the world of objectivity is a vindication of Plato over the materialists,<sup>28</sup> since making this distinction requires an awareness that when the entire world of objects is mentally gathered together, it can still be opposed to the abstract subject (i.e. to something which is not material, not determinate, not empirical, i.e. not an ‘object’ in the traditional sense). It must be admitted that there is such an abstract subject because the totality of the objective world is present to the abstract subject. Thus the abstract subject can express its independence from corporeity; and since the expression of this independence is precisely *philosophy*, the practicing of death, we can say that Epicurus was wrong.

Epicurus is wrong because death is not “nothing for us” as he supposed it to be.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, that death is *for us* at all (that we are able to experience the soul’s withdrawal from the corporeal world) means that it cannot be nothing for us. But then what exactly is death for us? What are we to make of the manifest ability we have to distinguish ourselves from all corporeity, and thus to engage in philosophy and practice death? For both Plato and Hegel this ‘death’ is to be understood as a rebirth into a new life, the life of spirit. Yet for Hegel this new life, the life of spirit does not remain a flight from the material world, and here he parts with Plato. Rather, for Hegel the life of spirit permeates the material world, making the latter into an expression of itself. The making of the material world into an expression of spirit (i.e. the making of the body into an expression of the soul) is precisely what we meant above when we spoke of the subject ‘objectifying

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<sup>28</sup> See pp.7-18 in chapter one for my discussion of these alternative views of the human being. See also *Phaedo* 65d-66a, *Theaetetus* 184b-185d.

<sup>29</sup> Epicurus, “Epicurus to Menoeceus” p.85, *Principle Doctrines* II, p.95.

itself,' and knowing itself in this objectivity; and it is what we meant when we said that spirit is an identification of the self with itself that includes and is based on a prior differentiation.

We are now prepared to give an explanation for the different meanings of “subjectivity” for Hegel, to which we referred earlier. Subjectivity can mean abstract subjectivity, i.e. subjectivity removed from all objectivity; yet subjectivity is most properly understood not as excluding objectivity, but enveloping it. Thus subjectivity (in the latter, the truer sense) is characteristic of spirit, which has no (enduring) opposites. Accordingly, Walter Jaeschke has correctly pointed out that “subjectivity [*Subjektivität*]” for Hegel should not be taken in its everyday meaning of the consciousness of a singular person (which does have definite limits). Rather, subjectivity for Hegel in its technical sense means “the movement of the becoming of itself, thus a movement that mediates with itself through the negation of its other,”<sup>30</sup> and this process “includes the aspect of [self-]knowing.”<sup>31</sup> Jaeschke distinguishes “subject” (determined by its opposition to an object) from “subjectivity” which is, as the quote illustrates, that which *returns to itself* out of this opposition; or, “subjectivity” is the way of spirit.<sup>32</sup>

Jaeschke is right in making this distinction. As a semantic matter, this distinction is contained in (indeed, it is *central to*) Hegel’s understanding of the “subject” or “subjectivity.” It is also true however that Hegel’s *usage* obscures this distinction. Thus

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<sup>30</sup> Jaeschke, “Absolute Subject and Absolute Subjectivity in Hegel” p.198.

<sup>31</sup> Jaeschke, “Absolute Subject and Absolute Subjectivity in Hegel” p.199.

<sup>32</sup> The extent to which the individual “finite spirit” of the human being qualifies as subjectivity (and indeed, as spirit) will be treated in the third chapter, in which “subjective spirit” (the section which includes the anthropology) is explained in relation to “objective spirit” and “absolute spirit.”

Düsing notes that for Hegel, “subjectivity” can refer to the contingent and arbitrary (*willkürliche*) individual (the one championed by the romantics), or to the external reflection of the understanding (as seen in Kant and Fichte). It can also mean pure thought which thinks itself, yet still stands opposed to objectivity; or, it can refer to the idea that thinks itself and is one with objectivity (spirit, or absolute subjectivity).<sup>33</sup> When in the *Science of Logic* Hegel calls the doctrine of the concept the “subjective logic,”<sup>34</sup> as when he articulates the growing “subjectivity” of nature throughout the section on the organism in the *Philosophy of Nature*,<sup>35</sup> subjectivity should be understood as Jaeschke describes it, as Düsing describes “absolute subjectivity,” and how we have described the subjectivity belonging to spirit (viz. subjectivity which envelops objectivity, *realizing itself* in objectivity, rather than excluding it).

*The body as the reality of the soul; or, the soul's realization of itself in a body*

Subjectivity, my own self, is therefore not just the void that remains when all objectivity is abstracted (i.e. when I turn away from the whole corporeal world, including my own body). We call such abstract subjectivity a “void” because it is nothing definite: it is only the absence of all objectivity (since it is that which I distinguish from the objective world in turning away from it). It is because this abstract subjectivity is nothing definite that Epicurus denied it any reality: he declared that everything that is anything for us are material things, objects. Accordingly, for Epicurus death (the turning away

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<sup>33</sup> Klaus Düsing, „Hegels Begriff der Subjektivität in der Logik und in der Philosophie des subjektiven Geistes“ pp.201-202. See also Düsing, „Endliche und absolute Subjektivität: Untersuchungen zu Hegels philosophischer Psychologie und zu ihrer spekulativen Grundlegung“ p.43.

<sup>34</sup> *WL* p.241. See also *EPW* §215 & *A*.

<sup>35</sup> See for example *EPW* §§252 on the division of the *Philosophie der Natur*, as well as §§342-345, 349-351, 353, 358*A*, 365 & *A*, 366, 373*A*, 374, 376.

from the material, objective world) is nothing to us because death would be the turning toward nothing, the subject without an object. Hegel's understanding of this inward turn on the part of the self is much more delicate and sensitive than was that of the crude Epicurus. Unlike Epicurus, Hegel was able to see that even if death is nothing to us, this 'nothing' (of which we have some inkling, some conception) is still something, i.e. that in this abstraction the abstract subject turns inward on itself, and transforms itself into an object, i.e. *determines* itself.

We say that the self 'determines itself' because when the self turns inward and takes its own abstract subjectivity as its object, it grasps itself in two different ways: (1) it grasps itself first of all in opposition to the world of objects from which it differentiated itself by turning inward; yet (2) it also grasps itself as *internally* differentiated (insofar as this 'other,' its object, is nothing but its own self).<sup>36</sup> The opposition of the abstract subject to the world of objects already renders it (in Hegelian terminology) "determinate in-itself": that is, determinate, limited in virtue of its own nature as *abstract* subjectivity, regardless of whether it knows itself to be determinate or not. Yet when the abstract subject turns back on itself and makes itself (in its abstract subjectivity) into its object, then it knows itself to be determinate and hence is "determinate for-itself." When the subject takes the additional step of recognizing that it is *insofar* as it turned away from the material world and made itself completely indeterminate that it rendered itself

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<sup>36</sup> Recall in chapter one that what differentiated the human from the animal was that the animal is unable to know itself as internally differentiated: thus when its self appeared to it as something external, it immediately destroyed this appearance. The human being on the other hand, knows this otherness (even as otherness) as belonging to its own self.

determinate, then the subject is “determinate in-and-for-itself,” in other words, self-determining. The self-determining subject is one that *realizes itself in objectivity*.

The terseness and familiarity of the phrases “determines itself” and “realizes itself” obscure the depth of Hegel’s meaning. We are so used to speaking of self-realization or self-determination in a highly qualified way that we may not immediately appreciate what is involved in *absolute* self-realization or self-determination (which is what Hegel is talking about here<sup>37</sup>). In the familiar cases of relative self-determination (self-determination in a qualified way) a person makes a choice (say, between going to work or skipping work). The person, hitherto indeterminate in the sense of having either of those two and many other possibilities, determines himself by choosing one course of action (say, skipping work). We call this course of action a determination of the person’s self because it allows the person to exist in a specific way (viz. as not working), and reveals for us something about his character, i.e. about his own self (viz. a tendency toward indolence): thus we know this behavioral modification to be a modification of, a determination *of* the person’s own self.

The lazy man in our example might object however that this one choice does not exhaustively define him—and he would be right: this action is only one modification of his character, and we cannot present it as an adequate and exhaustive image of his *self*. This man’s self may determine itself in many other modifications: some of these modifications may show diligence. A modification showing diligence would be contrary to the previously examined modification (the choice to skip work), though it would be a

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<sup>37</sup> This idea of absolute self-realization is implied in how Hegel describes the concept of spirit, e.g. as having an object identical with the subject, or as spirit having an externality which is the complete realization of it (*EPW* §381).

modification of the same self. The inappropriateness of the identification of the man himself with this one action (the decision to skip work) results from the fact that this is a case of self-determination only in a *relative* sense. On the other hand, what we are talking about here (viz. the self-determination of spirit), is a case of *absolute* self-determination: the self objectifies itself, but this objectification<sup>38</sup> is not a mere modification of itself (with the substance of the self held in reserve, undetermined and amorphous); rather, this objectification is its *very self itself*.

*An example of absolute self-determination: national self-determination*

It is difficult to think of phenomena which meet the stringent criteria for being cases of *absolute* self-determination. In what follows we will give several examples illustrating this aspect of spirit. To make these clearer, recall what they are meant to illustrate:

- (1) spirit is the self's withdrawal from everything that is for it objective,<sup>39</sup>
- (2) but in this withdrawal, spirit makes its own self into its object<sup>40</sup>;
- (3) thus spirit is at once subject and object, i.e. it determines itself in objectivity.<sup>41</sup>
- (4) This determination is not a mere moment of the self, but rather the self itself.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> "Objectification" here and in what follows should be taken as a noun, referring to the product, or result of the self's realization of itself in objectivity (i.e. the determined, or actualized self), and not as a verb, referring to the activity that brings about this result.

<sup>39</sup> *EPW* §382.

<sup>40</sup> *EPW* §§381, 383.

<sup>41</sup> *EPW* §§381, 383.

<sup>42</sup> *EPW* §383.



We will be concerned here mainly to illustrate (3) and (4), though we should not forget (1) and (2) as their foundation.

An example might be national self-determination. However, national self-determination would only be *absolute* self-determination if the nation objectified its very self, and this is rare. The citizen merely voting for this or that representative, or a legislator passing this or that law are not cases of absolute national self-determination. That is, the U.S. Congress passing a law regulating the details of consumer bankruptcy is not national self-determination in the *absolute* sense. Renan famously defined the nation as “a daily plebiscite”<sup>43</sup> such that a people are one nation only because each day they affirm this commitment. For Renan, the nation would therefore determine itself absolutely every single day. However, let us take some examples of national self-determination whose character as absolute is less debatable. The assembling of the second Continental Congress in 1775, and the articulation of the constitution of the emerging American union (in addition to the drafting of the document outlining this constitution), or the Union’s declaration of war against the would-be secessionist states in 1861, or the ‘tennis court oath’ taken by the members of the French Estates General in 1789—these are cases of *absolute* national self-determination. The national self-determination is absolute in these cases because the act of the nation is at once the

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<sup>43</sup> « Une nation est donc une grande solidarité, constituée par le sentiment des sacrifices qu’on a faits et de ceux qu’on est disposé à faire encore. Elle suppose un passé ; elle se résume pourtant dans le présent par un fait tangible : le consentement, le désir clairement exprimé de continuer la vie commune. L’existence d’une nation est (pardonnez-moi cette métaphore) un plébiscite de tous les jours, comme l’existence de l’individu est une affirmation perpétuelle de vie. [A nation is therefore a great solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made and of those one is prepared to make still. It presupposes a past; yet it is summed up in a tangible fact: the consent, the desire clearly expressed to continue a common life. The existence of a nation is (forgive me this metaphor) a daily plebiscite, as the existence of an individual is a perpetual affirmation of life.]» (Ernest Renan, *Qu’est-ce qu’une nation?* p.241. My translation).

creation (or re-creation) of the nation; or, it might be more proper to say that in these instances the nation acts and realizes its own self in a *state*.

Yet perhaps the best example of absolute national self-determination is provided by the Athenians, in their abandonment of their city during the second war with the Persians. When we say that the Athenians abandoned their “city,” we are actually speaking ambiguously: in a sense it is true that the Athenians abandoned their “city” in order to avoid annihilation by the Persians; yet in another sense, the Athenians never abandoned their city. The Romans understood the ambiguity here, and they accordingly distinguished between the *urbs* (“the city” in the sense of the physical territory and the buildings built on top of this territory) from the *civitas* (the city proper, i.e. the united citizenry, their customs, laws, and way of life).<sup>44</sup> We will see in the case of the Athenians that it is very important to understand the difference between *urbs* and *civitas*.

As the Persians overcame the Spartan three hundred at Thermopylae and threatened to besiege Athens,<sup>45</sup> the Athenians sent a party to question Apollo at the oracle at Delphi as to what they should do to save their city. Far-seeing Apollo answered: “Athens will be saved by a wooden wall.” While some Athenians thought that this meant that the walls around the *urbs* would protect them, Themistocles (whose interpretation was the true one, and the one the Athenians ultimately accepted) argued that the “wooden

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<sup>44</sup> Alcaeus of Mytilene understood this as well: “Not hewn in stones, nor in well-fashioned beams,/ Not in the noblest of the builder’s dreams,/ But in courageous men, of purpose great,/ There is the fortress, there the living state”(fragment 22, p.69).

<sup>45</sup> Some historical background: Xerxes was leading the Persian empire in its second invasion of the Greek mainland in 480 B.C., having already subordinated the Ionian cities in Asia Minor. The Persians defeated and killed all of the Spartans, Thebans and Thespians guarding the narrow pass at Thermopylae, the only natural obstacle keeping them from Attica (the Athenian homeland). Considering Attica (and Athens) already lost to the Persians at this point, Sparta decided to fortify the isthmus at Corinth, and thereby to defend the Peloponnesus. The Athenians were thus left to fend for themselves.

wall” was the Athenian fleet, and that the *civitas* should temporarily abandon the *urbs*, taking refuge elsewhere while the Athenian fleet should fight the Persians at Salamis.<sup>46</sup>

Were this episode to be the only thing we knew about this nation and its history, it would still be enough to make Athens the most loved and admired city in history for thoughtful and noble-hearted people the world over. For in their time of crisis, the Athenians gave us what is perhaps the most perfect living image of the eternal structure of spirit. Let us recount what we see when we gaze upon this beautiful image.

To understand what happened, we must see first of all that Athens, the city, was not a mere aggregate of people and objects. Rather, it was one *self* (the Athenians knew this because they had been educated by the poets, who sang of the city personified as the goddess Athena). Thus when Athens responds and acts, it does so in the manner of a self. This self has a ‘body’ (its *urbs*, the territory and buildings), and a ‘soul’ (the Athenian people, with their constitution and way of life). Now, we can identify a certain *symbiotic*<sup>47</sup> tendency of Athens, leading up to the war with the Persians: viz., the tendency of the ‘soul’ to fail to distinguish itself from its ‘body’ (its *urbs*). Accordingly, the first response to Apollo’s prediction was to dig in behind the city walls: it did not at first occur to Athens that it was anything but the buildings within these walls. However, Themistocles was able to prompt Athens to turn inward on itself and differentiate itself

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<sup>46</sup> Herodotus, *Histories* VII.140-143. See also Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War* 1.73-74, 89; 6.82.4 and Plutarch, *Lives* pp.139-40.

<sup>47</sup> Recall, symbiosis is the psychological state preceding individuation: the naïve immersion of subjectivity in its environment, in which the distinction of itself from the objects it experiences is not explicit for it.

even from its physical presence (as *urbs*), to know itself rather as *civitas*. In this way, Athens (as *civitas*, as soul) was able to leave its ‘body’ (i.e. its *urbs*).<sup>48</sup>

At this moment of infinite anguish, Athens showed itself to be devoted to Apollo not just in rallying behind the “wooden wall,” but in *knowing itself*, which was Apollo’s eternal commandment. In this self-knowledge, Athens grasped itself as not simply the rocky terrain of Attica, or the buildings comprising the *urbs*, but rather as the Athenian way of life, the Athenian spirit: to be cultivated and intellectual without being effeminate, and courageous in war without being barbaric.<sup>49</sup> Enduring this separation of its deepest self, its soul from its *urbs*, Athens was able after the Greek victory to reappropriate its ‘body.’ In this reappropriation, Athens did not live in its *urbs*, its corporeity in the manner of pre-reflexive absorption in externality. Rather, Athens reappropriated its *urbs* as the material in which it realized its soul: thus after the war with the Persians, the theater in Athens did not remain a mere part of the *urbs*, but rather echoed with the tragedies of Aeschylus; and the rocky terrain of Attica was taken up and transformed by Phidias into the statue of Athena in the Acropolis.

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<sup>48</sup> This happened in the second war against the Persians. But this theme, in which the city as constitution is distinguished from the city as buildings and land, or is conflated with it comes up again and again in Thucydides’s account of the Peloponnesian war. It is Themistocles (1.43.5) and Nicias (7.77.4; 7.77.7) who bring honor and undying fame on themselves by making this distinction, and allowing Athens’ soul to shine through its body, while it is the loathsome Alcibiades (6.92.4; 8.47.1-2) and his lackey Pisander (8.53.3; 8.86.3; 8.91.3) who confound the city’s soul with its mere body, leading Athens to corruption and destruction. See also: 2.18 for Archidamas’ woeful misjudgment of the ability of the Athenians (in the early years of the war) to distinguish themselves from their mere ‘body,’ and 8.54.1-2 for the final, disgraceful capitulation of the Athenian spirit toward the end of the war, as Athens sells its soul to preserve its body, thereby terminating its career as the leading national embodiment of spirit. All that remained for Athens was to come to know in thought the form of spirit which previously it lived, but which now has grown old: thus Plato represents his philosophy as originating from a similarly heroic separation of the soul from its body (in the person of Socrates) (*Phaedo* 64a-c, 67d-e, 81a).

<sup>49</sup> So at least was the Athenian spirit represented by Pericles (Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War* 2.40).

*Examples of absolute self-determination: Athena and Achilles*

It would have been truly glorious if some poet had articulated a myth in which Athena (Athens personified) removed herself from her body after a period of immediate absorption in it, only to reappropriate it, this time making it the expression of her divine soul. Since Athena was born from the head of Zeus fully armed and arrayed in battle gear,<sup>50</sup> these trappings are as much a part of her body as her divine flesh and the ichor in her veins. A poet might therefore have sung that Athena suffered a kind of alienation from her armor, coming to view it as something strange and foreign. Subsequently she could have reappropriated her armor in such a way that henceforth it would be an extension and expression of her soul.<sup>51</sup> In other words, a poet might have sung that Athena had suffered what was suffered by one of the mortal heroes dear to her heart: I am speaking of course of Achilles.<sup>52</sup>

Achilles was the son of the Titaness Thetis and the hero Peleus.<sup>53</sup> Thetis had submerged her son almost completely in the river Styx in order to make him almost invulnerable to death.<sup>54</sup> Moreover, the smith god Hephaistos had made Thetis a present

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<sup>50</sup> *The Homeric Hymns* 28.4-6.

<sup>51</sup> In fact, Athena's skinning of the giant Pallas, and subsequently wearing his skin as armor (Apollodorus, *Library* 1.37) (the feat which gave her the epithet "*Pallas Athena*") might be interpreted in this way, as might her sporting of the *gorgoneion*, the countenance of the Gorgon on her chest (as she is depicted in certain statues, though Apollodorus says she put the gorgon's head in the middle of her shield (*Library* 2.46)).

<sup>52</sup> Indeed, in some instances, Athena and Achilles are indistinguishable. When fighting Hector, Achilles says "Athena will kill you with my spear" (Homer, *The Iliad*, XXII, 319).

<sup>53</sup> Apollodorus, *Library* 3:171.

<sup>54</sup> Or, according to Apollodorus, Thetis submerged Achilles in fire to destroy his mortality, until she was stopped by his fearful father (*Library* 3.171), just as Demeter did to Demophoön before his fearful mother Metaneira saw this and shouted (*The Homeric Hymns* 2.235-253).

on her wedding day of the armor that Achilles would wear.<sup>55</sup> This armor also made Achilles nearly invulnerable (thus Achilles, like Athena, had divine armor). One might ask why Achilles needs a nearly invulnerable body and also nearly invulnerable armor. The answer is that he has both only because in his story *his armor functions as a double for his body*. We will see how this is so in our analysis below. What it is most important to attend to in this analysis is therefore Achilles' relation to the external world, especially his armor (a double for his body, and in some sense, for himself).

First, let us give a brief overview of the sequence of relevant events, then we will analyze them with an eye toward the illustration of the structure of spirit as absolute self-determination in Achilles' relation to externality in general, and his armor/body in particular. At the beginning of Homer's *Iliad*, Achilles refuses to fight with the Achaeans. Rather, he skulks by his ship, as his countrymen are slaughtered by the Trojans. Achilles lends his armor however to his friend Patroclus. Patroclus is subsequently killed by Hector (the Trojan champion), who then strips Patroclus of the armor, and wears it himself. To avenge his friend, Achilles kills Hector (knowing full well from the prophecy related to him by his mother that once he kills Hector his own death is imminent), and takes back his own armor along with Hector's body (depriving Hector's relatives of the right to bury it). But when Priam, Hector's father comes to Achilles to beg for his son's body, Achilles relents and turns over Hector's body. Now, let us turn to our analysis.

When Achilles refuses to fight, i.e. when he refuses to be a hero, the invulnerability of his body and armor serve only to prolong his natural, corporeal life—

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<sup>55</sup> Apollodorus, *Library Epitome* 4.7.

from which Achilles at this point symbiotically fails to distinguish himself.<sup>56</sup> Achilles also however fails to distinguish himself from his friend Patroclus, to whom he freely lends his armor: this oversight will make possible his individuation and eventual spiritual reappropriation of his body. By wearing Achilles' armor Patroclus becomes a double for Achilles: he is initially mistaken for Achilles by the Trojans, and Achilles lends him the armor only because he does not differentiate between himself and Patroclus. But because of this lack of differentiation, when Patroclus' dead body is brought back to the Achaean camp, Achilles suffers tremendous grief and rage: it is as if he has experienced his own death. Yet this grief is the beginning of his "individuation," his realization that this body (Patroclus' body, which had been covered by Achilles' own armor), a body with which Achilles formerly identified, is not himself: rather, this body, Patroclus' body, is dead; Achilles himself however lives on to suffer the infinite pain of the loss of this body, with

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<sup>56</sup> Thus at this stage of the poem, Achilles famously denies that fame is worth dying for, preferring *nostos* (the return home) to *kleos* (fame) (IX 373-522). Some commentators have seized on this to claim that the *Iliad* is an anti-war poem, but nothing could be further from the truth: though Homer here does not flinch from depicting the horrors of war (and he depicts them *as* horrible), the fact remains that despite its horrors, the war is *necessary* (and therein lies the tragedy). The structure of the Greek universe is held together by the rule of Zeus: it is only with Zeus that the disorderly cycle of sons overthrowing their fathers (Chronos overthrowing Ouranos, Zeus overthrowing Chronos) is curbed. Zeus bears no children at all with his wife Hera to avoid an heir dispossessing him. It is because of the prophecy that Thetis will bear a son stronger than his father that Zeus avoids copulating with Thetis and marries her off to the mortal Peleus instead. It is at the wedding of Thetis and Peleus that Eris (strife) introduces the golden apple with 'to the most fair' inscribed on it, causing an argument between Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite as to who deserves it. Paris (the Trojan prince) is chosen to settle the dispute, and chooses Aphrodite in return for the hand of Helen (Menelaos's wife)—thus sparking the Trojan war. Therefore for the coherence of the universe to be guaranteed, for Zeus not to be overthrown and everything to be thrown into chaos, Thetis and Peleus must be wed: this leads to both the outbreak of the Trojan war and the birth of Achilles. Achilles' mortality (i.e. that his father be Peleus) is therefore necessary for the rule of Zeus to be preserved; and the particular event which causes Achilles's death (the Trojan war) is equally necessary. Achilles was thus born to die. While for Christians it is God who suffers to redeem the sins of man, for the Greeks it is man who has the most glorious of all vocations: suffering to redeem the crime committed by the gods (viz., patricide) in founding the world. Achilles's momentary doubt (in book IX) questioning whether death in battle is really glorious, is thus like Christ's lament on the cross: "Father, father, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34). The *Iliad* can therefore no more be an anti-war poem than Christianity can be an anti-incarnation religion.

which had had identified. Achilles' very feeling of grief is therefore the beginning of his individuation, and implicitly his transcendence of his unreflective sympathetic or symbiotic state. The process of individuation is completed when subsequently Achilles strides out to fight Hector. We must note that in facing Hector, Achilles is not simply fighting his enemy. Hector is wearing Achilles' own armor (which is a double for Achilles' own body). Achilles thus here gazes on *his own self*, which he now apprehends as something foreign, hostile—as an enemy (i.e. as something *objective*).

What then, is the meaning of Achilles' killing of Hector and his subsequent reappropriation of his own armor (i.e. his own 'body')? It can only be that Achilles has cancelled the alterity of this 'objective self.' Achilles' armor, his body, is no longer something with which he identifies pre-reflectively, something whose near-invulnerability serves only to prolong his corporeal existence. Rather, in killing Hector and reappropriating his own body (i.e. his armor), Achilles chooses undying fame (in epic poetry, a *spiritual* form) over unending (but merely *natural*) life.<sup>57</sup> We should also note that in choosing undying fame, Achilles foregoes a return home: he will subsequently be buried in a *foreign land*, never returning to the home which was familiar to him, in which he formerly lived in unmediated immersion.

In making this decision, Achilles' body (and armor) serve no longer to prolong his natural existence; rather, they become the expression of his soul. Achilles' body and armor are spiritualized by his heroic deeds, and the immortality conferred on him by the

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<sup>57</sup> This point is underscored (as Nagy remarks) by the fact that in killing Hector, Achilles penetrates his own armor (made by Hephaistos and given to Achilles' mother, the *immortal* goddess Thetis) with his ash spear (given to him by his *mortal* father Peleus). Thus in the act whereby Achilles accepts his own mortality, he uses the emblem of his mortality to overcome the symbol of his immortality (Gregory Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans* p.173n).



poets. This spiritualization of the body, its function as the expression of the soul and its invulnerability to natural corruption (even in death) is posited for us<sup>58</sup> (though not yet for Achilles) first in Achilles' shield, and second in *Hector's* body. Achilles' shield is a part of his armor, i.e. his body, which depicts various scenes illustrating the different aspects of the distinctly human life (city life, agriculture, the administration of justice, etc.)<sup>59</sup>—that is, the 'body' here is the expression of the soul. The vanquished Hector's body is dragged by Achilles in his chariot, but it does not suffer any disfigurement<sup>60</sup>: i.e. the body has been spiritualized by the soul and raised above the corruption endemic in nature.

But the story of Achilles does not end as he kills Hector: as Achilles reappropriates his own armor (i.e. his own body), he also takes *Hector's* body. The appropriation of Hector's body, occurring as it does at the same time as Achilles reappropriates his own self, can only indicate that implicitly, Achilles' spiritual return to himself has allowed him to begin to identify with externality. Despite the fact that Achilles still shows considerable rage toward Hector's body, we must not fail to see that Achilles' appropriation of Hector's body—*after* it has been stripped of his (Achilles') armor—is implicitly an identification with the enemy *even as enemy*, and not simply insofar as the enemy is in the guise (the armor) of one's friend or one's own self. In other words, the taking of Hector's bare body (his body stripped of everything which had made him the appearance of to Achilles of his own self as something external) is an indication

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<sup>58</sup> See the remark on p.71n regarding my use of the term "for us."

<sup>59</sup> *Iliad* XVIII.558-709.

<sup>60</sup> *Iliad* XXII.465-477; XXIII.209-220.

that Achilles has begun to identify with externality, to see himself in it *even in its externality*, even in its foreignness.

This identification with externality as such becomes *explicit* as Achilles welcomes into his tent Priam, the leader of his enemy, and the father of Patroclus' killer. Indeed, Achilles receives Priam more warmly than he had earlier received Odysseus, Phoenix, and Ajax, his own friends. Moreover, after receiving Priam, Achilles magnanimously relinquishes to him the body of Hector. Our *Iliad* reaches its climax as Achilles releases the body of Hector because it is only at that point that he finally explicitly identifies with externality in a human, spiritual way. Commentators typically argue that Achilles sees himself in Hector because he too has a mortal father (a fact of which Priam's presence reminds him),<sup>61</sup> or because with Hector's death his own becomes imminent, or simply because Hector is another human being. Yet to properly understand Achilles' identification with Hector we must see that Achilles identifies with Hector not despite the enmity and foreignness between them, but rather *because* of it. In releasing Hector to Priam, Achilles knows himself in what is external to him, opposed to him, in a way that does not require the suppression of the externality of this appearance, but rather tolerates its release. This is precisely what it is to be human, to be spirit.

*The stages of life: adulthood as subjectivity and self-determination*

From these examples it is clear that what is at stake in absolute self-realization is whether what is realized, the objectification, is truly the self (in its substantiality, and not

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<sup>61</sup> The currency of this interpretation far exceeds its merit. For, if this were true, if Achilles' heart melts at the sight of Priam because of his memory of his mortal father, why did Achilles not cede to Phoenix and grant his request in Book IX? Achilles could not very well have forgotten that Phoenix raised him, and was a father figure to him, given that Phoenix delivers a long speech reminding him of it (IX.527-737). Indeed, far from forgetting Phoenix's paternal relation to him, Achilles even calls him "old father" (IX 739).

a mere modification of it). That is, what is at stake is the healing of the chasm between the subject and the world of objects that opens up when the subject first begins to know itself as something distinct from the world. We noted above that an infant seems to lack awareness of itself as something distinct, but that the brooding adolescent, who knows the world as something alien to himself and begins to know himself as something alien to the world, knows the separation of subject and object all too well. Now that we have a more adequate introduction to spirit however, we can (making further use of the stages of life as our metaphor) see that the alienation of adolescence (i.e. of the abstract subject) is not interminable, i.e. that maturity, adulthood (which would be *true*, not abstract, subjectivity) is possible.

Maturity would be precisely the re-establishment of the subject's identification with the objective world, but not through regression to symbiosis, a state before the emergence of their differentiation. Rather, maturity involves the self's objectification of itself in reality, its realization of itself in the world. If the self were irremediably alien to the objective, material world, then its 'objectification' or 'realization' would not be an objectification or realization *of itself*, but rather only another part of a coldly objective reality that would be *for the subject* inert and unresponsive. But Hegel's analysis of spirit shows that the objectification in question is at once *an object*, and *the self itself*, and thus that the self does realize or determine its very self.

Now, what is this self-objectification of spirit? It is the whole world of spirit: everything human and divine. In the anthropology Hegel is concerned with the soul's realization of itself in objectivity as the *human body*, such that the human body is the

body *of the soul*. As such, the human body cannot be properly understood mechanically, chemically, or even organically. The human body is not mere *res extensa*, not inert matter that is alien to the soul (though the reunion of the soul and body accomplished in spirit is, as we have seen, dependent upon the prior sundering of the two). Hegel's analysis of spirit is the scientific (in the sense of *wissenschaftlich*) basis for the impression we all already share that the human body is not simply a body in the way that a stone or a block of wood is a mere body, exhausted by its extension. The impression that the human body is not mere extension, or even mere living tissue is thus not a sentimental superstition that empirical science must root out; nor is it a 'social feeling' bred into us by evolution (and hence a vitally useful falsehood). Rather, this impression is more accurate than the contrary account empirical science would give; and the accuracy of this impression is confirmed by the proper understanding of the human being that speculative philosophy furnishes.

The human body is thus the body *of the soul*: not as its property (of which it could dispose arbitrarily), but rather as its expression or externalization, for itself and for others. It makes a difference however whether the soul is infantile, adolescent, or mature: clearly, the infant, the adolescent, and the adult all have bodies, but the self in each case does not 'have' its corporeity in the same way. The self of an infant or a child is spread out over everything it experiences. Thus a child may burst into tears if a favorite toy is lost or destroyed. This reaction makes sense because the child has not yet differentiated itself from what it experiences: thus such a loss (of what is *for us*<sup>62</sup> an object external to

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<sup>62</sup> See p.71n for a remark on the use of the locution "for us."

the child) is experienced by the child as a loss of his own self (which is understandably traumatic).<sup>63</sup> An adolescent on the contrary differentiates himself not only from his environment (which includes not only his physical vicinity, but also the mores and values of his time and place), but even from his own body. The strangeness of his own body to him is aggravated by the changes taking place during puberty. This alienation is evident to everyone in the awkwardness typical of adolescents, who are, as we say, not at home in their own skin. The adult on the other hand is at ease with himself, carries himself well, and is perhaps even graceful in his gait and mannerisms.

We thus have in the analysis of spirit the germ of Hegel's argument that: (1) the human body is material and objective<sup>64</sup>; yet (2) the human being cannot be exhaustively or adequately understood as something merely material (i.e. the human being has a soul, insofar as the human being is able to withdraw from the corporeal, objective world)<sup>65</sup>; and (3) the human body is *the body of the soul*, the soul's manifestation in objectivity.<sup>66</sup> This self-determination, in which the self knows its identity with its other, and knows the identity of subject and object, is what Hegel means by "spirit."

*A final example of absolute self-determination: the Karok, or Araar*

Spirit is very difficult to understand, and so another example may be in order. It is possible for an entire society to have or to lack a collective awareness of itself as a shape of spirit, as we can see by contrasting the United States with a certain Native American

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<sup>63</sup> This could be interpreted as a concretion of "self-feeling," which we will examine in chapter five.

<sup>64</sup> *EPW* §387.

<sup>65</sup> *EPW* §382.

<sup>66</sup> *EPW* §§383-384.

tribe. There was in California in the 19th century a Native American tribe which the American government officials called “*Karok*.” The *Karok* however did not originally call themselves “*Karok*.” “*Karok*” was a word in the tribe’s own language meaning “upstream,” which the Americans used to distinguish them from those they called the “Yurok,” who lived further downstream.<sup>67</sup> The American government was not in the habit of inventing names for the indigenous tribes it encountered, but in this case they found it to be necessary. The reason for this unique name was that when the government officials asked the *Karok* what they were called collectively (i.e. what their tribe or nation was called), the *Karok*, probably a bit puzzled, answered “*Araar*,” which in their language means simply “human beings.” The *Karok* (or *Araar*) thus showed that, as a tribe, they had no sense of their own collective identity. They were unaware that they formed a social unit which was distinct from (and limited by, opposed to) other such social units.

The American nation on the other hand was at the time in the process of forming itself. Indeed, the aggressive expansion that brought Americans into contact with the *Karok* was part of this very cultural formation. The American identity had begun to be formed by the Revolutionary War (1776-1783), by which independence from England was won, and the subsequent War of 1812 (1812-1815), in which it was defended. These wars were the result, not the cause of the cultural differences between the Americans and the British; but it was not until after the military conquest of political and economic independence that the American people begin to *self-consciously* differentiate themselves culturally from the British. In the 1820s, Noah Webster composed the first *American*

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<sup>67</sup> Edward S. Curtis, *The North American Indian* vol. 13, pp.57-58.

*Dictionary of the English Language* (in which the spelling of many words was deliberately changed from the British style). At the same time, Washington Irving and James Fennimore Cooper, and later Walt Whitman, Edgar Allen Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Herman Melville developed the first uniquely American literary style, openly breaking with the English and semi-English American colonial style. Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau contemporaneously enunciated a “transcendentalist” philosophy, which, while remaining largely a German import, was vehemently opposed to the traditional British empiricism. The *Karok* (or *Araar*) however, for whatever reason (perhaps geographical isolation), had never had such an awakening of itself as a distinct nation, and so it had to receive passively a distinctly national name (*Karok*) from foreigners.

Let us now ‘flesh out’ our metaphor. The ‘body’ of a nation (in this example) would be its culture: its customs, laws, religion, language, food, way of life.<sup>68</sup> This ‘body’ is the manifold expression of the unitary ‘soul’ of the nation, the soul’s realization of itself. Before encountering the Americans, the *Karok* (or, those who would later be called the *Karok*) had such a culture, but it was not explicit for them: they did not consciously know themselves through this culture because they were unaware that anyone else anywhere else had a way of life that was in any way different from theirs. For these people, their culture was simply *the* culture. To put it in the language of Freudian

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<sup>68</sup> As Hegel says, “each nation has a time-honored [*hergebrachte*] national trait, its own manner of eating, drinking, and its own customs in the rest of its way of life” (*Die Positivität der christlichen Religion* p.106). In this early work which he left unpublished, Hegel tries to show how what I have called the ‘body’ of a people (its customs, etc.) can be something *merely* objective, merely positive, in which they do not recognize themselves and are not free. See also *Der Geist des Christentums und sein Schicksal* pp.274-418).

psychology, the *Karok* lived in a state of cultural symbiosis. The original encounter with the Americans must therefore have shaken these people: they unreflectively identified their culture with being a human being; and in the Americans they encountered other people who did not share their culture (humans who were not human). This experience may have prompted them to turn inward, examining their own culture for the first time as something objective and to a certain extent arbitrary: i.e. this experience may have led them to become estranged, or at least ironically detached from their own culture.

Yet, naiveté and estrangement are not the only two possibilities: if upon encountering the Americans this nation had undertaken to examine itself (its culture) through its own native cultural (e.g. artistic or religious) forms, then it would have become possible for it to arrive at spiritual maturity as a nation (and perhaps this is what happened). For example, in response to the encounter with the Americans, the *Karok* religion might have turned inward and taken itself as its object: myths might then have been enunciated not about the gods in relation to *Araar*, human beings generally, but of the gods in relation to the *Karok* specifically (these myths might for example have given an explanation for the intrusion of the Americans on their ancestral land, like a plague of locusts).

In other words, the *Karok* might have done what the Greeks did after the encounter with the Persians. After the war the specifically Greek cultural form of tragedy (in Aeschylus' *The Persians*) turned back to examine Greek culture itself as something distinct from Persian culture. The Greeks thus acquired national spiritual maturity just as the *Karok* might have (and perhaps did), since in the phenomenon which such cultural



introspection would produce, the subject (*Karok* culture) and the object (*Karok* culture) would be distinguished, yet identical. Likewise, in the case of Aeschylus' play, the subjective form of national self-examination (viz. tragedy) was Greek culture, and the object too was Greek culture. That is, on the theater's stage, the Greeks objectified themselves, determined and realized themselves as a nation. Had the *Karok* done this (and perhaps they did) they would have been *happy*: they would have lived in their culture as the Greeks of the 5th century lived in theirs, and as a human being lives in his body.<sup>69</sup>

Now that we have had an introduction to spirit, and we have some familiarity with how the human being is spirit, how the human body is the realization of the soul, let us turn to the *Encyclopedia* for a close reading of some key notions from the paragraphs Hegel devotes to "the concept of spirit." By studying these we will be in a position to begin a more rigorous investigation of the first concretion of spirit that Hegel gives, viz. the human body.

### The concept of spirit

It would be worthwhile to go through the paragraphs in the *Encyclopedia* that Hegel devotes to elucidating the concept of spirit (§§381-4) not only line by line, but word by word. However, these paragraphs occupy such a pivotal point in Hegel's system that a full explanation of what is contained in them would require a complete explanation of Hegel's entire *Encyclopedia* (a task which for practical purposes is not feasible here).

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<sup>69</sup> In the same vein, Goethe is reputed to have said that he who knows only one language knows none. Friedrich Max Müller, the pioneer of comparative religion and mythology, added that he who knows but one religion knows none (*Introduction to the Science of Religion* p.16). To be properly at home in one's language or one's religion, one must know the nuances that color it, and make it different from other languages or religions.

We would do better then, to limit ourselves to explaining certain key points that Hegel makes in these paragraphs. To this end, the aim of the rest of this chapter will be to explain: infinite pain (*unendliche Schmerz*) or absolute negativity (*absolute Negativität*), and manifestation (*die Manifestation*) or revelation (*das Offenbaren*). The concept of spirit gives a basic definition of what spirit is in relation to what Hegel calls “the idea [die *Idee*]” and “nature [*Natur*].” Accordingly, to explain infinite pain, absolute negativity, and manifestation or revelation (i.e. to explain the concept of spirit) we will have to make a few remarks (which for practical purposes must remain brief) about the overall relation between the idea, nature and spirit.

*Hegel’s Logic: neither a transcendental logic, nor a formal logic of the understanding*

Hegel’s *Encyclopedia* has three volumes. The first volume is the *Science of Logic*; the second is the *Philosophy of Nature*; and the third is the *Philosophy of Spirit*. In this dissertation we are focusing on the third volume—indeed, only a small part of the third volume (the anthropology). Observe the following schema:

Science of Logic (§§1-244)

Philosophy of Nature (§§245-376)

Philosophy of Spirit (§§377-577)

Subjective Spirit (§§387-482)

**Anthropology** (§§388-412)

Phenomenology (§§413-439)

Psychology (§§440-482)

Objective Spirit (§§483-552)

### Absolute Spirit (§§553-577)

To understand the anthropology we must be able to examine it from the standpoint of the whole. Yet, as we said, the explanation required to establish such a perspective and make it intelligible to the non-specialist would be interminable. Yet we cannot avoid placing the anthropology in some perspective, however quickly practical considerations obligate us to rush through our investigation of the relevant parts of the logic and the philosophy of nature.

To state it briefly and roughly, the *Science of Logic* gives Hegel's deduction<sup>70</sup> of the various ontological categories that constitute everything in nature and in spirit (in the material world as well as in the human and divine world). Hegel's logic is not a formal logic, i.e. not a logic of the understanding (*Verstand*). A logic of the understanding is concerned with abstract equations and formulae which express laws ostensibly governing formal relations which are valid no matter what the content. Thus a logician of the understanding might present the law of identity ( $A=A$ ; or a thing—any thing—is itself, and is not other than itself) as valid for absolutely everything: material bodies, chemicals, living tissue, abstract concepts, products of imagination, human beings, God, etc. Hegel is not hostile to this type of formal logic as such, but he is scrupulous about keeping it

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<sup>70</sup> I use the term “deduction” because Hegel himself uses the term to describe the moves he makes in his system: see for example *GPR* §§2A, 141A. For Hegel, a deduction is a proof (*Beweis*) that begins not from empirical reality (and to this extent his meaning agrees with what most people mean by the term), but rather on the necessity of the concept in question (*GPR* §2A). For example, a certain concept being accepted (from having previously been deduced), it may be shown upon analysis of this concept that it has certain necessary implications. The analysis that brings these implications to light is the “deduction.” See for example the way the concept of chemism is “deduced” from the concept of mechanism, as shown in chapter one. It belongs to the necessity of the concept of mechanism that a body has relations to other bodies which are constitutive of its identity: the analysis that results in this insight is the deduction of the concept of chemism from the concept of mechanism. See also Peperzak, *Modern Freedom* pp.85-91.

within its proper limits: as we have seen in chapter one and in our foregoing introduction to spirit in this chapter, it is not ultimately true that everything adheres purely and simply to the law of identity. Thus we saw in chapter one that a body is determined by its other, and so ‘has its very self outside of it.’ Insofar as the identity of a thing can be determined by its relation to another, it is not exactly true to say simply that each thing is itself and is not other than itself. Hegel therefore rejects the naïve application of such formal logical categories out of attentiveness to and respect for the things themselves, insofar as these things in some cases, simply because of what they are, reject these categories.

To this extent, Hegel takes his cue from Kant. The reader will recall that Kant replaced the formal logic of Aristotle and the scholastics with his own transcendental logic.<sup>71</sup> Kant thus recognized that logical categories properly apply not to things themselves, but to phenomena (things as they appear to us, in the way that we are able to experience them); and that therefore we must restrain ourselves from applying the concepts of our understanding (*Verstand*) to those objects which transcend what are for us the conditions of possible experience, and hence cannot appear to us (even if we find ourselves obligated to *think* these objects when confronted with what does appear to us). Kant thus distinguishes phenomena which can be determined by our concepts (i.e. the categories belonging to our understanding) from ideas (contents generated by our reason

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<sup>71</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* Bxiii-ix.

[*Vernunft*] which we must think, but which cannot be determined by the concepts of our understanding).<sup>72</sup>

“Ideas” (*Ideen*) for Kant include: the limits of the universe in space and time; the simple; free causality; and a necessary being.<sup>73</sup> Were we to try to determine ideas by our concepts, we would find ourselves in an “antinomy”: i.e. the existence and the non-existence of the object of the idea could be proven with equal validity.<sup>74</sup> For Kant it is a “transcendental illusion” that we could apply the concepts of our understanding to what are properly seen as ideas of reason: such an illicit application of the understanding’s concepts would result in a “dialectic” which would be deceptive and unprofitable. Hence such a dialectic should be avoided.<sup>75</sup>

Thus we find for example (in the first antinomy<sup>76</sup>) that the physical universe can be ‘understood’ (i.e. determined by concepts of the understanding) with equal justification as finite and as infinite. The whole of the physical world must be finite because whatever we can experience as material has certain limits. But it must be infinite because were it finite, that would mean that it is bounded by something: this ‘something’ would likewise have to be material—but if it is material, then it should have been included in our original account of the whole physical universe, and cannot be considered now to be outside of the physical universe, limiting it. Since each side of this

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<sup>72</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* Bxvi-xxii; A313/B374-A332/B389.

<sup>73</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* A333/B390-A338/B396.

<sup>74</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* A340/B398.

<sup>75</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* A293/B249-A298/B355.

<sup>76</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* A426/B454-A433-461.

antinomy can be defended with equal validity, Kant says, we should refrain from attributing to the totality of the physical world any determinate (finite or infinite) magnitude whatsoever. The totality of the physical universe is for Kant not a phenomenon which can be determined by our understanding's concepts: rather, it is an *idea* which we can (indeed, must) think (*denken*), but of which we can have no cognition (*Erkenntnis*).

When Hegel investigates corporeity, he encounters an antinomy similar to the one Kant discussed in his first antinomy (viz. that a body has a definite spatial extension, but that this determinacy brings it into *necessary* relation with its opposite, such that that which *is not* this body determines its very identity, and the body has *its own self* outside of it). However, when Hegel encounters this contradiction in the mechanical understanding of bodies, he does not conclude that we are ignorant of the nature of corporeity and must remain so. Rather, Hegel concludes that we *are* able to comprehend corporeity, but that the concept of mechanism is of only *limited* validity for this task. Moreover, Hegel concludes that in encountering the contradiction in this antinomy, reason encounters the limits not of its own cognition, but of the validity of the concept of mechanism; and further, that in encountering these limits, reason transcends them, revealing a new and more adequate concept by which to determine bodies (viz. chemism).<sup>77</sup>

Corporeity is *more adequately* understood by chemism insofar as chemism recognizes what was operative but not explicit in mechanism: viz. that a body is

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<sup>77</sup> *EPW* §§195-200, 271.

determined by its opposite, that the identity of a body is determined by its relation to its other.<sup>78</sup> The “contradiction” encountered in our “antinomy” is thus resolved (and hence shows itself to be “contradictory” and “antinomical” only in a limited sense). This resolution is not accomplished by the *introduction* of a higher concept which is alien to the object under investigation (viz. corporeity as it is determined mechanically). Rather, the resolution is accomplished by the “positing” (*Setzen*), or making explicit of what was already implicit. As mere filled space (i.e. as determined merely mechanically), a body has its self outside of it. However, though it is operative, this external determination is evident to us only through a deep analysis of the concept of mechanism. On the other hand, unlike merely mechanical objects, chemicals do not hide from us this aspect of themselves (viz. their determination from without); and thus dialectical thought is not required to tease this aspect out. In chemicals, this external determination is ‘on the surface’ as it were: it is posited, it is explicitly part of the concept of chemism. The more concrete concept (viz. chemism) integrates the various principles which together make up the concept of mechanism (viz. that a body is filled space, that the identity of a body is its spatial dimensions, and that a limit in space is a relation to another), placing them in their proper context so that they may be seen as not opposed to each other: i.e. the higher concept lifts (*hebt*) these principles up (*auf*) into a higher perspective so that they can be integrated in such a way that they do not destroy and undermine each other. The Hegelian *Aufhebung* thus avoids the outcome which Kant feared inevitably characterized

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<sup>78</sup> Mechanism held this other to be simply another extended object, internally unrelated to the first. Chemism on the other hand understands the other to be a body in relation to which the first is polar and reactive.

“dialectic.” Through a series of such *Aufhebungen*, Hegel presents his onto-logic, and subsequently, his philosophies of nature and spirit.

*Hegel and the early moderns: God as the principle of nature and spirit*

The summit of Hegel’s Science of Logic, i.e. the result of the series of *Aufhebungen* that constitutes his logic (and hence the most comprehensive determination of both thought and being), is what he calls the “idea” (*Idee*). Hegel does not mean by this term what Kant means however. Nor does he mean what Plato means. Least of all does Hegel mean what most people understand by “idea”: viz. any content of consciousness whatsoever, be it fabricated and unreal, or, at best, corresponding to reality as an image to the original. Rather, the idea for Hegel is by its very definition real: it is “the concept” (*Begriff*) as it is realized.<sup>79</sup> The concept for Hegel is that thought-determination (category of reason which governs both thought and objectivity) which underlies all natural and spiritual reality, realizing itself in various forms and drawing this variety back into the unity of itself.<sup>80</sup> Insofar as the concept underlies all natural and spiritual reality, and the idea is precisely the reality of the concept, it is clear that both nature and spirit ‘are,’ in a certain sense, the idea.

Hegel’s deduction of the idea places him at the summit and completion of early modern metaphysics. While Hegel’s debt to Kant (on which we remarked earlier) is undeniable, he also shows affinities with pre-critical rationalists such as Spinoza and Leibniz, and perhaps to a lesser extent Descartes. All of these early modern

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<sup>79</sup> *EPW* §§212-213.

<sup>80</sup> *EPW* §§159-160.



metaphysicians were concerned with explaining the relation between the world of nature and the world of spirit (the problem which today is glibly referred to as ‘the mind-body problem,’ and is reduced to the relation between the individual human ‘mind’ and body).

Let us take Spinoza as an example. For Spinoza, the world of extended bodies and the world of thoughts (or, roughly, what Hegel would call “nature” and “spirit”) are of different orders: bodies affect only bodies, and thoughts likewise relate only to other thoughts.<sup>81</sup> Interaction between nature and spirit seems inexplicable. However, there is *in fact* a remarkable correspondence between the order and relations among bodies and the order and relation among thoughts: thus it is only as a ball actually rolls across a table that I have a perception of a ball rolling across a table (i.e. the one natural phenomenon is mysteriously correlated with the other, spiritual phenomenon). For Spinoza this correspondence can be explained because of his deduction that there can only be one *substance* (viz. God, the substance of which every individual body and every individual thought is only a *mode*), and that this substance must have infinite attributes (i.e. an intellect as such can apprehend the essence God in infinitely many ways) of which we (finite intellects) can perceive only two (extension and thought, or, roughly, what Hegel would call nature and spirit).<sup>82</sup> Thus the essence of the one substance, God, is manifested in the order and connection of bodies in the world of nature, and equally in the order and

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<sup>81</sup> *Ethics* part I, propositions I & II.

<sup>82</sup> *Ethics* part I, proposition XIV.

connection of thoughts in the world of spirit.<sup>83</sup> God, for Spinoza, is therefore the fundamental reality underlying and realized in both nature and spirit.

Indeed, this understanding of God seems to have been the convention among the early modern rationalists.<sup>84</sup> Thus for Descartes it is by an appeal to God and God's benevolent nature<sup>85</sup> (whose existence he had previously deduced<sup>86</sup>) that we can be assured that the world of bodies in nature is in fact as we perceive it to be in our thoughts. Likewise, for Leibniz<sup>87</sup> it is God who is responsible for the correspondence or harmony between nature and spirit. Even for Kant, God is brought into his philosophy as a linchpin to justify our hope that those who are good (who have a proper spiritual constitution) will be rewarded with happiness (i.e. that nature will be arranged according to their wishes).<sup>88</sup> God is thus for the early moderns that principle from which both nature and spirit proceed, and in which they are united. In this sense, Hegel too is an early modern: however, what the early moderns called "God," Hegel calls "the concept," and his name for the reality of God in nature and spirit is "the idea."<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> *Ethics* part II, proposition VII.

<sup>84</sup> Hegel notes in the remark to §389 of his *Encyclopedia* that the classical rationalists took God for the union of nature and spirit, and indicates briefly that he does not agree with the way they describe this unifying principle.

<sup>85</sup> *Meditations* VI; *Principles* part IV, CCVI.

<sup>86</sup> *Meditations* III; *Principles* part I, XIV.

<sup>87</sup> *Discourse on Metaphysics* XIV.

<sup>88</sup> Kant, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* pp.124-132.

<sup>89</sup> God proper for Hegel is not simply the undifferentiated unity of nature and spirit. The divinity of God for Hegel depends on God's self-knowledge: thus God is properly *spirit*, not an abstract, undifferentiated substance.

Hegel differs from all of the early moderns however in the way in which he deduces the unity of nature and spirit, and its realization or manifestation as nature and spirit. Hegel differs most sharply in this respect from Kant, who worked out a theory of nature (in the first *Critique* and *the Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*) and a philosophy of freedom, or spirit (in the second *Critique*, the *Groundwork*, the *Metaphysics of Morals*, and *Religion within the Limits of Reason alone*), only at the end of which (in the postulates of practical reason in the second *Critique* and again in a different way in the *Religion* book) did he find himself compelled to bring in God to hold nature and spirit together. Hegel more closely resembles Spinoza insofar as both begin with a deduction of that which unifies nature and spirit (which Hegel calls the concept and Spinoza calls the substance) before proceeding to show why nature is (and why it is as it is) and why spirit is (and why it is as it is). Hegel differs from Spinoza however insofar as Spinoza begins straightaway with a list of definitions and axioms, and in eleven short propositions he deduces the existence of the substance. Hegel on the other hand begins with what is most immediately evident and commonplace (that there is being) and arrives at the concept only toward the end of his logic.

*An ontological category that is different from itself and the same as itself*

It may be of some help for us here to give a very brief and rough sketch of how Hegel arrives at the concept. This sketch is necessary because it is not immediately apparent how there could be deduced something like the concept, which as idea is at once different from itself (as nature)<sup>90</sup> and the same as itself (as spirit).<sup>91</sup> Our intention here is

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<sup>90</sup> Nature is defined as the idea in its externality to itself (*EPW* §247).

not to give a survey of the whole of the logic. All we intend here is to make more comprehensible the concept as both different from itself and the same as itself. For this purpose, let us turn to the very beginning of the logic, to see how the end is there prefigured. The first category of the logic is “becoming [*Werden*],” which is the *Aufhebung* of being (*Sein*) and nothing (*Nichts*)<sup>92</sup>: i.e. in becoming being and nothing are rendered “identical,” while still remaining different. If we can demonstrate here precisely how the first category of the logic can thus be different from itself and identical with itself, that should clarify somewhat how at the end of the logic the concept, as realized in the idea, is different from itself (in nature) yet identical to itself (in spirit).

Hegel begins the logic proper with “being” (*Sein*), which can ostensibly be said of absolutely everything.<sup>93</sup> In a sense, it is true that being can be said of anything and everything: no matter what precisely something is, *it is*; if it *were not*, then it would not be anything. Not yet having deduced the thought-determinations required for particular things, Hegel does not allow himself to speak of them at this stage. However, reference to such particular things would facilitate our explanation of Hegel. Our aim is a rigorous exposition only of the anthropology, and not of the entire *Encyclopedia*. Since our task here thus differs from Hegel’s task in the logic, we may beg the reader’s indulgence and grant ourselves liberties that Hegel does not take himself. Specifically, we will take the liberty of referring to what Hegel has not yet deduced in order to show in a more expedient way precisely how the category of being is inadequate.

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<sup>91</sup> Spirit, as we will see below, is defined as the idea knowing itself in its externality to itself (*EPW* §381).

<sup>92</sup> *EPW* §88.

<sup>93</sup> *EPW* §86.

The inadequacy of the category of being lies in the fact that even as being encompasses everything, it leaves something out, viz. non-being. The world is not simply pure being: if it were, there would be no determination, no distinctions, and thus no extension in space or passage of time (since both of these imply determination). In other words, if the world were pure being, it would be The Parmenidean One<sup>94</sup>; and all that we could say of it would be “it is.” In fact, we would not even be able to say that, since our utterance would then be something *different from* The One. But if difference and determination (and other such ‘negatives’) *are*, then non-being *is* in some sense.<sup>95</sup> Moreover, if there is determination, i.e. if one thing *is not* another, then being itself *is not* in some sense (since it is different from—i.e. it *is not* non-being). It is clear then that being is such an empty category that instead of expressing everything, it in fact expresses *nothing*: this is true first of all insofar as pure being is utterly indeterminate and so does not express anything in particular; yet it is also true insofar as its utter indeterminacy renders “being” indistinguishable from pure, empty nothing.<sup>96</sup> Insofar as being and nothing are indistinguishable, they are “identical”; yet despite this “identity,” they clearly remain opposites (in a sense which admittedly remains mysterious). Being and nothing are thus absolute opposites, yet in a sense identical.

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<sup>94</sup> Hegel explicitly makes reference to the Eleatics in this connection (*EPW* §86A).

<sup>95</sup> The parallels with Plato’s *Sophist* are too striking to pass over in silence. Just as here Hegel shows that nothing itself must *be* in some sense, and that being itself must be determined and thus negated in some sense, so the Stranger in the *Sophist* shows that being must partake of difference (since it is different from other forms), and thus difference itself exists (i.e. partakes of being). ‘That which is not’ is thus not contrary to being, but only different from it (*Sophist* 257a-b).

<sup>96</sup> *EPW* §87.

In being and nothing (taken together, since they cannot strictly speaking be separated) we have an example at the beginning of the logic of a thought-determination which is at once different from itself and identical with itself. When we take being and nothing together in this way (as *becoming*, which both *is* and *is not*), we have performed the first *Aufhebung* of the logic; yet the tension in the ‘identity’ of being and nothing remains unresolved. Indeed, the interplay of difference and identity that we find first in becoming persists throughout the logic, even as higher and higher categories are deduced, giving an ever wider context and an ever more adequate determination and account of reality. It is this tension that drives the whole of the logic, and resolves itself ultimately into *the concept*.<sup>97</sup> The concept however does not resolve the tension in such a way that either identity or difference is eradicated. The concept is neither simple identity with self to the exclusion of difference, nor total irreducible difference alien to all identity, even with itself. The concept is neither absence of determinacy, nor the random headlong dispersion in dizzying determinacy. Rather, the concept is *self-determination*<sup>98</sup>: the concept differentiates itself from itself (i.e. objectifies itself), realizing itself in various, opposing forms; and it maintains itself even in this opposition to itself, bringing these opposing realizations back into unity with itself.<sup>99</sup>

The idea is precisely the realization of the concept (i.e. the concept itself as it is realized).<sup>100</sup> Our discussion of ‘absolute self-determination’ in the first part of this

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<sup>97</sup> See *EPW* §§159-160.

<sup>98</sup> *EPW* §160.

<sup>99</sup> *EPW* §§159-160.

<sup>100</sup> *EPW* §§212-213.

chapter has prepared us to understand how the concept ‘realizes itself’ in the idea.

The concept is not a flesh-and-blood person, but it is *subjective* in the sense we explained earlier: i.e. it does objectify itself, and in this objectification the concept realizes its own self as *idea*.

As we indicated above, the concept retains in a more developed form the difference within identity that was expressed first and most abstractly in the indistinguishability of the opposites being and nothing. As the ‘identity’ of being and nothing at the beginning of the logic retains a difference, so the concept’s realization in the idea is likewise of a dual, differential character: that is, the idea is at once different from itself (i.e. the concept realizes itself as the idea in different, even opposing forms), and the same as itself (i.e. it returns to unity with itself, out of its difference from itself). The idea in its difference from itself is nature<sup>101</sup>; the idea as it returns to unity with itself is *spirit*.<sup>102</sup>

*The idea as nature and as spirit*

We saw in chapter one how what belongs to nature (i.e. what is corporeal) is determined as different from itself. Recall, every body, insofar as it is a body, is determined from without; i.e. the principle of a body’s own identity (its ‘self’) lies outside of it—a body is *other* than itself. This estrangement of a body from its own self is most characteristic of bodies which are determined merely mechanically (i.e. bodies that are the most ‘natural’ insofar as they are the furthest from spirit). The identity of such a body is quite simply its dimensions; yet it is *other* bodies outside of the body in question

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<sup>101</sup> *EPW* §247.

<sup>102</sup> *EPW* §381.

which give it these dimensions and hold it within its limits.<sup>103</sup> Likewise for the chemical, it is its (polar) opposite which gives it its identity—but unlike the merely mechanical body, the chemical is able to bond with its opposite, thereby seizing its selfhood, as it were.<sup>104</sup>

However, even the newly formed compound is relative to *another* chemical, which determines *its* identity.<sup>105</sup> It is impossible for there ever to be an *absolutely neutral* chemical compound: each chemical is always polar relative to *another*, and hence it has its self outside of it. By its organic functions (digestion, respiration, etc.) the animal transcends mere chemical combination and dissolution.<sup>106</sup> Yet the animal's own organic nature leaves it also externally determined: in its desired object (food, or a mate) the animal feels its self outside of it.<sup>107</sup> In summary, all of these bodies (the mechanical, the chemical, and the organic) are determined externally, and thus have their selves, the principles of their identity, outside of themselves: in other words, here the idea is *opposed to itself*, i.e. the idea here is *nature*.

The idea returns to itself however as spirit. That is, the concept does not simply collapse into total dispersion in nature: in human beings (individually, taken together in cultures, and ultimately in art, religion, and philosophy), the concept comes to know itself as concept, and *as* idea, thereby reuniting with itself. Recall the contrast we drew in

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<sup>103</sup> EPW §261.

<sup>104</sup> EPW §§326-329.

<sup>105</sup> EPW §326.

<sup>106</sup> EPW §337.

<sup>107</sup> EPW §§365A, 369.



chapter one between human beings and animals. There is a phenomenon present in both human life and animal life which can be called “sexual desire.” In this phenomenon the subject of desire (whether human or animal) apprehends the object of desire (another human or animal) as his own self: that is, sexual desire involves for a human or animal the appearance of one’s own self as something external to oneself, specifically as *another* human or animal, with whom one must unite sexually. The phenomenon of desire always involves two moments: the identity between the subject and object; and a difference between the two. Were there no difference, the object would not possess anything which the subject lacks: the subject would thus feel sated (at least with respect to what the object is) and would not desire. Were there no identity however, then there would be nothing to draw the subject toward the object, with respect to which it would be indifferent: for there to be desire, the object must be that which *ought* to belong to the subject, but which *in fact* exists separate, as something external to the subject. –This is all we can say about sexual desire as a phenomenon common to humans and animals: beyond this, stark differences emerge between animal lust and human love.

The differences lie in the extent to which the subject of desire knows the external appearance (the object of desire) to be his own self. What makes animal desire different from human desire is that *for the animal*, its self is properly confined to its body (i.e. for the animal, its self ought to be located only in its body), and so any appearance of its self outside of these limits must be immediately assimilated (brought into the natural limits of the body) or destroyed. *The human* however knows itself to be in some sense beyond its own body: because of this the human being can freely identify with and see itself in its

environment, including its beloved. If it sounds strange to hear that the human self is ‘beyond’ its body, remember how we showed in chapter one that even though the human body does remain in some sense a mechanical object, the human being as such is not properly understood in the way *merely* mechanical objects are understood. What makes the human being human is that it knows its own self to be internally differentiated: i.e. it knows that it belongs to its very essence to appear to itself as something external. What this means is that the human being is *not only* a concretion of the idea (even an animal, even a mineral is a concretion of the idea), but it also *knows itself* to be the idea, and thus knows that the limits of its body are not the limits of its self. Indeed, the deepest self of not only the human being, but of everything in nature and spirit, is nothing but *the idea*; and what makes the human being human is that it can *know* itself *as* the idea, and thus the human being can know itself as not ultimately alien to anything in nature or spirit.

It is only because human beings can know themselves as the idea that it becomes possible for humans to say “we,” i.e. to know themselves as collective subjects. Thus there can be formed communities of spirit (e.g. friendship, marriage, nationality) which bind their constituents in a way that is even stronger than the strongest stones and metals found in nature. Nations, churches, and other cultural institutions can sustain themselves even as everything merely natural decays and collapses. Today the Acropolis is in ruins, but Plato’s *Republic* (and thus in some sense Plato’s Academy) still thrives: it is read all over the world, and remains untouched by the ravages of time.

*Infinite pain, or absolute negativity*

Hegel wrote §§381-4 in the *Encyclopedia* under the heading “The Concept of Spirit,” placing this toward the end of the introductory paragraphs to the *Philosophy of Spirit*. Hegel is not haphazard in his use of the term “concept” (to which we have had some introduction in the foregoing material). When he entitles these sections *Begriff des Geistes*, the concept of spirit, he means that these sections will concern the essence of spirit without getting into how this concept *realizes itself*. We will have occasion to study the human body as an objectification of the concept of spirit in later chapters. Here, we are concerned only with what spirit is in its concept.

In §381 Hegel says:

Spirit for us has nature as its *presupposition*, whose *truth* and therefore whose *absolute prior* [or absolute first] it is. In this truth nature is vanished and spirit has resulted as the idea which has attained its being-for-itself, whose *object*, just as its *subject* is *the concept*. This identity [of subject and object, both of which are concept] is *absolute negativity*, since in nature the concept has its completely external objectivity, yet this externalization is sublated and the concept has become identical with itself in this. It is therefore this identity only insofar as it is a return from nature.<sup>108</sup>

Let us first consider what Hegel means when he says: “spirit has resulted as the idea which has attained its being-for-itself, whose *object*, just as its subject is *the concept*.” He means here that spirit is the idea which has succeeded in knowing itself, or

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<sup>108</sup> „Der Geist hat für uns die Natur zu seiner Voraussetzung, deren Wahrheit und damit deren absolut Erstes er ist. In dieser Wahrheit ist die Natur verschwunden und der Geist hat sich als die zu ihnen Fürsichsein gelangte Idee ergeben, deren Objekt ebensoviel als das Subjekt der Begriff ist. Diese Identität ist absolute Negativität weil in der Natur der Begriff seine vollkommene äußerliche Objektivität hat, diese seine Entäußerung aber aufgehoben und er in dieser sich identisch mit sich geworden ist. Er ist diese Identität somit zugleich nur als Zurückkommen aus der Natur“ (§381). See p.71n for a remark on the use of the locution “for us.”

as having itself as its object (that is what is meant by its having attained “being-for-itself”); and that in this knowing, both the subject and the object are precisely the concept. The significance of this should be fairly clear at this point. The reality of the concept is the idea,<sup>109</sup> but there are two aspects to the idea: the idea in its externality to itself (this is nature), and the idea knowing itself in its externality to itself, and thereby reuniting with itself (this is spirit).

Thus spirit, like nature, is the idea, but what distinguishes spirit from mere nature is that spirit *knows itself to be the idea*. Spirit is therefore the self-knowing idea, which has itself for object; and since the idea is the reality of the concept, spirit can also be called the self-knowing concept (i.e. spirit is the concept which knows itself as concept). Thus although both spirit and nature are the concept, they are not the concept in the same way.

An analogy might make this clearer: *I* (this individual human being) am both my soul and all of the diverse parts of my body—but my soul and the parts of my body are not me in the same way. The parts of my body are external to each other: my head is outside of my neck, both are outside of my torso, which is outside of my arms and legs, etc. Given the externality of my body parts to each other, it would *seem* that if one part is me, then the others cannot be me. However, my soul permeates my entire body, feeling and (in some sense) knowing in every part. My soul is not another part of my body, it is the unity that pervades my body, present in each part but not exclusive to any part. Through my soul, I know all the various parts of my body to be myself, *despite* their separation from each other. Likewise, all of nature is the concept, and spirit too is the

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<sup>109</sup> *EPW* §§212-213.

concept; but in nature the concept is outside of itself, while in spirit the concept knows itself and thus in some sense returns to unity with itself.

It should be clear then why Hegel goes on to say (in the third sentence of §381): “This identity [of subject and object, both of which are concept] is *absolute negativity*, since in nature the concept has its completely external objectivity, yet this externalization is sublated and the concept has become identical with itself in this.” The inward turn of spirit is a turn away from all of external objectivity, all of nature, an introversion into the pure self, the ‘I’. Yet no sooner does the ‘I’ turn back on itself, away from all objectivity, than it objectifies itself: it makes itself into an *object*, an *other* for itself. In positing its deepest self as an *other*, the self posits its identity with external objectivity. Let us explain this step by step: there would be *negativity* if the self differentiates itself from this or that external object; there is *absolute* (unlimited) *negativity* when the self differentiates itself from all external objectivity (even its own).

For Hegel, absolute negativity is the concept’s exclusion (and reinclusion) of all externality from itself—it even excludes its own externality from itself; but this exclusion requires that it turn back on to itself, taking itself as its *object*. In other words it requires that the concept objectify itself, that it make its own deepest self into something external (and this self-externalization is implicitly the reinclusion of externality generally, since this self-externalization is the identification of the concept itself and externality). This externalization (*Entäußerung*) of the concept is not however its destruction. Rather, it is the concept’s realization, its *manifestation* in external existence. Recall: to exclude all externality from itself, the concept must turn inward and objectify its own self; this

means that it posits the identity of itself and externality. Far from losing itself, losing its selfhood, the concept thus extends itself out into nature, into external existence and posits this objective world as *its* world.

The first step for spirit in claiming the world as its own is however to withdraw from it, to withdraw from all objective externality, as we have seen. This withdrawal is not sufficient however, and that is why Hegel calls it only the *formal* essence of spirit.<sup>110</sup> In §382, Hegel calls this withdrawal the submission to “infinite pain”: “It [spirit] can bear the negation of its individual immediacy, infinite pain.”<sup>111</sup> This “infinite pain” should be understood in the same way as the “absolute negativity” that Hegel mentions in this and the previous paragraph. The submission to infinite pain is the withdrawal from all external objectivity: it is the turning inward by which spirit emerges from nature, and the human being shows himself in his distinctly human character. Athens submitted to infinite pain when it abandoned its *urbs*; Achilles submitted to infinite pain when he encountered Patroclus’ corpse, and subsequently when he fought against Hector, who was clad in his (Achilles’) own armor.

When Hegel says that spirit can maintain itself as affirmative and be identical to itself even in this negativity,<sup>112</sup> he does not mean (if we may, for the sake of illustration, speak of spirit as such in terms of the individual embodied finite spirit) that the spirit is a simple, immaterial soul which is separate from the manifold body and which, as a simple

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<sup>110</sup> „Das Wesen des Geistes ist deswegen formell die Freiheit, die absolute Negativität des Begriffes als Identität mit sich“ (EPW §382).

<sup>111</sup> „er kann die Negation seiner individuellen Unmittelbarkeit, den unendlichen Schmerz ertragen“ (§382). See also VPR (1827) p.229.

<sup>112</sup> „er [spirit] kann [...] in dieser Negativität affirmativ sich erhalten und identisch für sich sein“ (Hegel, EPW §382).

soul, remains the same throughout the corporeal flux, unaffected by it. Were that the case, then the negativity would not be absolute; the pain would not be infinite. What Hegel is saying is rather that spirit does not simply remove itself from all externality, because when it does withdraw from externality, it thereby also externalizes *itself*: spirit turns inward on itself and in so doing makes itself into an *object*. In this externalization or objectification spirit in a sense *gives up* its very selfhood (by ceasing to invest itself in any externality) and suffers a kind of *death*—that is the meaning of *infinite* pain. Spirit is able to *endure* infinite pain however because its self-objectification is not its annihilation, but rather its extension of itself into nature—as we said above, it is its *manifestation* in externality (thus spirit in a way ‘wins back’ its selfhood).

#### *Manifestation and revelation*

Hegel says in the first three sentences of §383: “This universality is also its *being-there* [*Dasein*]. As it exists for-itself, the universality is self-*particularizing* and therein self-identical. The determinacy of spirit is thus *manifestation* [*Manifestation*].”<sup>113</sup> The “universality” Hegel is referring to is the indeterminateness that spirit has insofar as it submits to infinite pain, absolute negativity: it is the universality of withdrawal from all objectivity and externality. Hegel says that this universality is also spirit’s *Dasein*, spirit’s *determinate* being because through this withdrawal, this turning inward, spirit also externalizes, objectifies itself. Thus through its extreme indeterminacy spirit becomes determinate: i.e. spirit determines itself, gives itself *Dasein*.

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<sup>113</sup> „Diese Allgemeinheit ist auch sein *Dasein*. Als für sich seiend ist das Allgemeine sich besondernd und hierin Identität mit sich. Die Bestimmtheit des Geistes ist daher die Manifestation“(EPW §383).

In the second sentence of §383 (“As it exists for-itself, the universality is self-*particularizing* and therein self-identical”) Hegel confirms the interpretation have offered above. Our analysis of spirit showed how turning inward is at once a flight from objectivity and a self-objectification, or a self-particularization. Moreover, we showed that in this self-objectification the difference between subject and object is sublated (since the deepest subjectivity into which the self withdraws becomes for it *an object*)—and thus that spirit in its universality remains identical with itself in its particularization. To say that this particularization is spirit itself, spirit in its universality yet in particular form (without for that ceasing to be universal), is to say that spirit’s determinacy is manifestation. –This is the third sentence of §383: “The determinacy of spirit is thus manifestation.”<sup>114</sup>

The rest of §383 reads: “Spirit is not just any determinacy or content, the expression and externality of which is a form distinct from spirit itself; thus it does not reveal something, but rather its determinacy and content are this very revelation. Its possibility is thus immediately infinite, absolute *actuality*.”<sup>115</sup> That what is revealed is nothing other than what does the revealing is clear from our examination of Spirit. This is the point we made when earlier we distinguished *absolute* self-determination from merely relative self-determination. Spirit turns inward toward its own deepest subjectivity. Yet, when spirit thematizes this subjectivity it at once *objectifies it*: spirit makes its deepest self into an object. A fissure is thus introduced into spirit’s very self

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<sup>114</sup> „Die Bestimmtheit des Geistes ist daher die Manifestation“ (EPW §383).

<sup>115</sup> “Er ist nicht irgend eine Bestimmtheit oder Inhalt, dessen Äußerung und Äußerlichkeit nur davon unterschiedene wäre; so das er nicht Etwas offenbart, sondern seine Bestimmtheit und Inhalt ist dieses Offenbaren selbst. Seine Möglichkeit ist daher unmittelbar unendliche, absolute Wirklichkeit” (EPW §383).



(insofar as spirit becomes an object for itself), at the same time as the breach between spirit and objectivity, or externality generally, is (or begins to be) healed (since it is *spirit itself* that is objective and external to itself). In the manifestation that is spirit, the manifestation is something particular, objective, external; yet for all that, this particular, objective externality is still universal, subjective, unified spirit.

In §384 Hegel speaks not of manifestation but of revelation (das *Offenbaren*). It is unclear whether Hegel means to communicate some nuance that differentiates das *Offenbaren* from die Manifestation. In §383 Hegel does use the verb *offenbaren* when he notes that manifestation does not reveal (*offenbart*) something (*Etwas*), but rather only itself. Manifestation on the other hand (considering only §§381-384) appears only in §383. There seems to be no discernible distinction between the meanings of these two words, though some translators do imply a difference.<sup>116</sup>

The use of *Offenbaren* is noteworthy however for another reason. The infinitive form of the verb “to open” is *öffnen* (as an adjective it is *offen*); -bar is a suffix used to transform nouns into adjectives (much like ‘-ness’ ‘-ity’ or ‘-ful’ in English); -en is the common ending for verbs in infinitive form. *Offenbaren* thus connotes opening. This connotation is appropriate insofar as spirit opens itself to its other, the natural world: it gives itself the world, making the world its own world.<sup>117</sup> Spirit thus sets (*setzt*) the

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<sup>116</sup> The Wallace-Miller translation of the *Philosophy of Spirit* (which they render as “mind”) translates *Offenbaren* and *Manifestation* inconsistently, sometimes rendering *Offenbaren* as “revelation,” sometimes as “manifestation.” In §384 Hegel says *Offenbaren* three times, and *Manifestation* not once; Wallace and Miller render the first instance as “revelation,” the second as “manifestation,” and the third as “to reveal.”

<sup>117</sup> The rhetorical effect of the use of the term *Offenbaren* is heightened by the fact that the moment of spirit that precedes it seems to be a kind of *closing off* of the concept to all externality. Hegel’s point is that the ‘closing off’ of absolute negativity is at once the *opening* of revelation.

natural world before (*voraus*) itself—i.e. spirit presupposes (*setzt... voraus*) nature.<sup>118</sup>

The deeper meaning of spirit's 'presupposition' of nature is thus that spirit posits nature before itself (i.e. *presupposes* nature) precisely in order to appear in it, to show nature to be spirit's own world. That is, spirit 'presupposes' nature only to show that it (spirit) is the truth of nature. Spirit's self-objectification and knowledge of itself in this objectification (which never 'happened,' but rather always is) is thus an opening up to objectivity, a free identification with its other.

Likewise, the absolute negativity of spirit seems to produce its particularization, in which it is revealed. Absolute negativity as such (taking this moment by itself) is no revelation: it is simply absence of determination, a void which defies comprehension insofar as it can only be defined negatively (as *not* this or that determinacy). Yet what Hegel shows in the *Encyclopedia* §§381-4 is that this absolute negativity *reveals* itself in particular, immediate form; and moreover, what is revealed, despite being unfolded in the particular and the immediate, is yet also the absolute negativity itself.

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<sup>118</sup> *EPW* §381. When we note as we have above how the construction of the German word for "presupposition" is well-suited to illustrate Hegel's meaning, we run the risk of presenting the concept's "positing [*Setzung*]" of nature before it as something spatial, as if the concept were in one place and it places nature in a place adjacent to it. Of course, spatially speaking, nature is not bounded by the concept—moreover, the concept is not a spatial thing which could limit anything in this way. Likewise, we do not want to present these different moments of spirit as succeeding each other temporally (though objective spirit does imply a history of spirit in some sense, as we will see in chapter three): what we are presenting here as the different moments of the concept of spirit should be understood as always relating to each other in the way described, without having to be brought into this relation (as into something in which they would be essentially uninvolved).

CHAPTER THREE:  
SUBJECTIVE, OBJECTIVE, AND ABSOLUTE SPIRIT

Introduction

Now that we have obviated some misunderstandings about the human body and soul (in chapter one) and had an introduction to what spirit means, in accordance with Hegel's presentation of the concept of spirit (in chapter two), we must here concern ourselves with the division of spirit: the principal moments into which it differentiates itself. First, we will say a few words about Hegel's method and give a schematic representation of the entire philosophy of spirit. Next, we will give some introductory remarks on how the principal moments of the philosophy of spirit should be understood, before delving into the details. Once this introduction has been completed, we will proceed through the philosophy of spirit quickly but in a way that makes clear the basic trajectory, with special attention paid to the first part, which includes the anthropology. Finally, we will give some closing thoughts on how the different moments of the philosophy of spirit should be understood in relation to each other. This will prepare us to begin our examination of the anthropology in depth, starting in chapter four.

*Method and schema of the philosophy of spirit*

It is part of Hegel's method throughout his *Encyclopedia* to give first a presentation of the abstract or "formal" concept of the subject matter. This is followed by a short section on the division of this concept. Only after giving the division of the

concept into its principal moments does Hegel go on to examine in detail these moments in their own determinations, proceeding from one to the next by a continuing deduction, concluding with a more concrete definition of the (first) concept. Thus the *Philosophy of Spirit* begins (after a few general remarks) with four paragraphs on “the concept of spirit” (§§381-384), followed by two paragraphs on the division of spirit into subjective, objective, and absolute spirit (§§385-386). After this division comes the detailed examination of subjective spirit in its own determinations (the first of which is the anthropology).<sup>1</sup>

We observed above that this was “Hegel’s method,” but in truth this is the method that belongs to the content itself: this is the way the absolute determines and reveals itself when it does so most perfectly (in the medium of thought, i.e. in philosophy). Hegel does not fashion this method for himself anymore than he fabricates the content: rather, he is only the happy man who dutifully records the absolute’s own comprehension of its revelation of itself to itself. It is important to note that this method belongs to the content itself, because were this not the case, we would not be engaged in properly speculative philosophy. Instead, we would have to bring a method to bear on a content foreign to it. As a result, we would be saddled from the beginning with a division between what the object of our investigation is *in itself* (apart from what would only be *our* method), and what it is *for us* (the content in the—possibly distorted—form our method allows us to

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<sup>1</sup> As we will see, each subsection unfolds according to the same method: presentation of the abstract concept; presentation of the division of this concept; presentation of each moment individually.

have it). Hegel disposes of this problem in the Jena *Phenomenology of Spirit*,<sup>2</sup> i.e. in the *introduction* to the systematic *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*. The relation between the Jena *Phenomenology* and the system proper is too complicated to be treated in detail here. Suffice it to say that within the system proper, the *Encyclopedia*, we can be assured that the method we use is the method of our content, the absolute itself.

It is fitting then that we should use this method here as well. The first chapter of this dissertation was a prologue before the work proper could begin. In this prologue we removed certain obstacles that, left in place, would have thwarted from the beginning any attempt to understand Hegel. The second chapter was a presentation of the abstract concept of spirit (that is, a presentation of what spirit is as such, the essence of spirit in abstraction from its division into subjective, objective, and absolute spirit). This chapter will give the division of spirit into its principal moments, and explain briefly what they are and how they relate to each other.

The philosophy of spirit can be schematically represented in the following manner:

**Philosophy of Spirit** (§§377-577)  
**Introduction** (§§377-386)  
     **The Concept of Spirit** (§§381-384)  
     **Division** (§§385-386)  
**Subjective Spirit** (§§387-482)  
     **Anthropology** (on the soul) (§§388-412)  
         Natural Soul (§§391-402)  
             *Natural Qualities* (§§392-395)  
             *Natural Changes* (§§396-398)  
             *Sensibility* (§§399-402)  
         Feeling Soul (§§403-410)

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<sup>2</sup> *PG* pp.53-55, 59-61 (margin pagination). This, the Jena *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807), should not be confused with the phenomenology of spirit as it appears in the *Encyclopedia*'s philosophy of subjective spirit. See p.71n for a remark on the use of the locution "for us."

*Feeling Soul in its Immediacy* (§§405-406)

*Self-Feeling* (§§407-408)

*Habit* (§§409-410)

Actual Soul (§§411-412)

**Phenomenology** (on consciousness) (§§413-439)

Consciousness (§§418-423)

*Sensuous Consciousness* (§§418-419)

*Perception* (or, taking to be true) (§§420-421)

*Understanding* (§§422-423)

Self-Consciousness (§§424-437)

*Desire* (§§426-429)

*Recognitive Self-Consciousness* (§§430-435)

*Universal Self-Consciousness* (§§436-437)

Reason (§§438-439)

**Psychology** (on spirit) (§§440-482)

Theoretical Spirit (§§445-468)

*Intuition* (§§446-450)

*Representation* (§§451-464)

Recollection (§§452-454)

Imagination (§§455-460)

Memory (§§461-464)

*Thinking* (§§465-468)

Understanding (§467)

Judgment (§467)

Syllogistic Reason (§467)

Practical Spirit (§§469-480)

*Practical Feeling* (§§471-472)

*Impulses and Choice* (§§473-478)

*Happiness* (§§479-480)

Free Spirit (§§481-482)

**Objective Spirit** (§§483-552)

**Right** (§§488-502)

Property (§§488-492)

Contract (§§493-495)

Right versus Wrong (§§496-502)

**Morality** (§§503-512)

Purpose (§504)

Intention and Welfare (§§505-506)

Good and Evil (§§507-512)

**Ethical Life** (§§513-552)

Family (§§518-522)

*Marriage* (§519)

*Family Property* (§§520-521)

*Raising of Children* (§522)

Civil Society (§§523-534)*The System of Needs* (§§524-528)

The Satisfaction of Needs by Work (§524)

Division of Labor (§§525-526)

The Estates (§§527-528)

*The Administration of Justice* (§§529-532)

Right as Law (§529)

The Positive Existence of the Law (§530)

The Judicial System (§§531-532)

*Police and Corporation* (§§533-534)The State (§§535-552)*Internal Political Law* (§§537-546)

The Power of the Sovereign (§542)

The Particular Powers (§§543-544)

The State's Immediacy (§§545-564)

*External Political Law* (§547)*World History* (§§548-552)**Absolute Spirit** (§§553-577)**Art** (§§556-563)**Religion** (§§564-571)**Philosophy** (§§572-577)

One reason Hegel divided the philosophy of spirit into precisely these sections and sub-sections (though there were some minor changes from edition to edition<sup>3</sup>) was to help his students to follow his lectures. Yet the divisions are not solely, or even principally, pedagogical in purpose. These are the divisions belonging to the content itself, i.e. to spirit itself. Were we to have from Hegel only free-flowing lectures, or writing with seamless transitions (as in the early essays which he wrote for the *Kritisches Journal der Philosophie*), i.e. text with no clearly established demarcation between sections, we would have to identify and articulate the structure ourselves. Hegel thus does us a great service in rendering his philosophy in the *Encyclopedia* in such a way that this

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<sup>3</sup> These changes do not concern our project. We are working with the third (1830) edition of the *Encyclopedia*. We will have occasion later (in chapter five) to note changes in terminology that Hegel uses between the different editions (e.g. from “träumende Seele” to “fühlende Seele”).

structure is so apparent. However, good writing still requires good readers: it is therefore our duty to reciprocate by paying close attention to this structure, and making sure we understand why spirit must be articulated in precisely this way.

It is clear from the outline above that the principal moments are subjective spirit, objective spirit, and absolute spirit. Our ultimate object in this dissertation is the anthropology, which is the first moment of the section on subjective spirit. However, we can only obtain a proper understanding of the anthropology by first understanding its place in the context of subjective spirit, and the place of subjective spirit in the context of the whole philosophy of spirit. In this chapter we will explore the articulation of the concept of spirit in its three principal moments, and also the articulation of subjective spirit into *its* three moments.

As we will see, the section on subjective spirit, the first moment of the philosophy of spirit, unfolds according to the same method as the philosophy of spirit as a whole. First there is a brief presentation of the abstract concept of subjective spirit, followed by its division (into anthropology, phenomenology, and psychology).<sup>4</sup> Following this is a detailed examination of these moments separately. Likewise, the anthropology, the first moment of subjective spirit, begins with a presentation of the concept of the soul,<sup>5</sup> followed by its division (into natural soul, feeling soul, and actual soul).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *EPW* §387.

<sup>5</sup> *EPW* §§388-389.

<sup>6</sup> *EPW* §390.



*An outline of subjective, objective, and absolute spirit*

After a cursory reading of the philosophy of spirit, it may appear that the three principal moments can be summed up in the following way: subjective spirit concerns individual human beings; objective spirit concerns relations between human beings; and absolute spirit concerns certain lofty human activities. This explanation is not wholly incorrect, but it is crude, inadequate, and misleading. Its shortcomings will be clear if we consider: (1) that this explanation does not explain why the sections are named as they are; (2) that this explanation does not demonstrate why it is necessary to make the transition from the first stage to the second, nor the second to the third; (3) that this explanation does not clarify why the moments themselves have precisely the contents that they do (these contents are, apparently, an individual human being, many human beings, and the knowing of the absolute itself). We would do best therefore to look deeper for a structural or methodological reason behind the division into subjective, objective, and absolute spirit.

The best place to look for such a reason is in the (abstract) concept of spirit, as we presented it in the last chapter. Let us briefly recapitulate this abstract concept. Spirit is the idea which has acquired being-for-itself, i.e. which knows itself in its other, knowing this other to be its own self.<sup>7</sup> The idea is the concept (that which underlies all natural and

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<sup>7</sup> *EPW* §381.

spiritual reality) that makes itself real.<sup>8</sup> There are two sides to the idea: nature, and spirit. Nature is the idea different from itself, opposed to itself.<sup>9</sup>

For example, let us take nature in its most abstract determination: space. Space is extension, and hence implicitly divided into parts. Of these parts, each is in some sense *space*, though it is also true that each is different from and outside of the others. Thus nature (as space) is one determinate space; but it is also *another* space, which is different from the first. But since each determinate space *is* in some sense space (and nature has at this stage been determined only as space), it can be seen that the idea as nature is *different from itself*. The idea is spirit insofar as it overcomes this difference: not by annihilating it (spirit is not the collapse of the spatial world into a single point), but by *knowing itself* in this other. Nature is the merely existent, unthinking idea: and for this reason, the idea as mere nature disperses itself, and (insofar as it is merely nature) does not overcome this separation from itself. Only *spirit* overcomes this separation of the idea from itself, and it does so by knowing itself in its other.

Thus spirit overcomes the idea's self-dispersion as nature, but not by rendering this difference somehow a pseudo-difference. Let us be clear: the idea remains different from itself as nature—this difference is not eradicated. Spirit is the idea's reunion with itself not by the attenuation of its difference from itself, but by the aggravation of this difference, and the carrying of it to its most extreme point. The most extreme point of the idea's externality to itself is what Hegel calls (in his explication of the concept of spirit)

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<sup>8</sup> *EPW* §212.

<sup>9</sup> *EPW* §247.

the suffering of infinite pain, or absolute negativity.<sup>10</sup> Infinite pain and absolute negativity refer to the same thing: the moment in which the idea distinguishes everything which can be an object for its own (abstractly subjective) self; but this turning inward, away from all objectivity and toward the abstractly subjective self is at once the making of this self into *an object*. That is, infinite pain and absolute negativity involve the idea's objectification of its own self. Since the turning away from all objectivity that characterizes "infinite pain" and "absolute negativity" necessarily involves the idea's *objectification* of itself, it can be seen that the idea's differentiation of itself from all objectivity is at once its intimate reunion of the most extreme subjectivity (absolute negativity) with objectivity. At this point the abstract distinction between subject and object (i.e. the pretense of a radical distinction of these two as if they were internally unrelated) collapses, and the self-determining subject (the idea) reveals itself as spirit.<sup>11</sup>

We must here make three points about this self-revelation of spirit.

(1) **What is revealed is the idea itself.** In the last chapter we discussed at length the difference between relative self-determination and absolute self-determination. In the former, the realized determinacy is only a mode of the self, such that the self reveals something, perhaps something from which some conclusion about the self can be inferred, but the self does not reveal its own self. In absolute self-determination on the other hand, the self determines its own self, i.e. makes itself into something determinate. My point here is to convey that one moment of spirit is the idea's determination of its own self. *In addition,*

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<sup>10</sup> EPW §382.

<sup>11</sup> EPW §§383-384.

**(2) Spirit cancels the alterity of this determinacy, knowing it to be itself.** It

is not enough to note only that the idea thus “reveals” or “manifests” its own self in the way described above. We must also note that the idea reveals itself to itself: thus not only does the idea become something determinate in this revelation, but it also knows itself in this determinacy, thereby overcoming the radical opposition between itself and the world of determinacy which characterizes nature. My point here is to convey that another moment of spirit is the overcoming of the alterity of the self’s objectification of itself. *However,*

**(3) What is contained in the concept of spirit and related in the two points**

**above** (viz. that the idea reveals its own self, and it knows itself in this manifestation), **is concretized in *different ways* in the philosophy of spirit.** It is on the basis of these differences that we must understand the distinctions and relations between subjective, objective, and absolute spirit.

In the philosophy of spirit Hegel deduces phenomenon after phenomenon which concretize the concept of spirit. However, there are three principal concretions of this concept, which together make up the axes on which the philosophy of spirit turns. These are: the soul, free spirit, and absolute spirit. A glance back at the schema will show that these belong to the beginning, the middle (roughly), and the end of the philosophy of spirit. Yet it is not the approximately even number of paragraphs between each of these that makes them the pivotal points in the text. Why they play such an important role in the philosophy of spirit will only become clear as a full explanation is given.

We can say first of all that all three of these, the soul, free spirit, and absolute spirit, concretize the concept of spirit. That is, in each of these the idea makes its own self into an object, i.e. realizes itself in determinacy (this is the idea's "manifestation"), and knows itself in this objectification, thus cancelling its alterity. Yet these concretions of spirit can be distinguished according to *that in which* spirit manifests itself, the objective<sup>12</sup> form in which spirit knows itself in each case. For the soul, it is nature, corporeity; for free spirit, it is the happy life attainable for spirit in its immediacy (i.e. the happiness of an existing individual); for absolute spirit it, is objective spirit (i.e. the state).

In the philosophy of nature, nature is deduced as the idea's revelation of its own self as something objective and determinate; but it is not yet posited that in thus revealing itself, the idea has revealed itself *to itself*, i.e. it is not yet posited that the idea *knows itself* in this objectivity, and is thus *spirit* (initially determined as soul). Likewise, in the section (in the philosophy of spirit) on objective spirit, objective spirit is treated as spirit's revelation of its own self as something objective and determinate; but it is not yet posited that in thus revealing itself, spirit has revealed itself *to itself*, i.e. it is not yet posited that spirit *knows itself* in this objectivity, and is thus *absolute spirit*. To explain the course of the philosophy of spirit is to explain how the deduction proceeds from the first concretion of spirit (the soul, which in its initial form is spirit that is for-itself undifferentiated from nature) to its culmination as absolute spirit. Admittedly, we must understand the whole of the philosophy of spirit in order to fully grasp any part; yet insofar as the topic of this

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<sup>12</sup> The poverty of language forces me to make ambiguous use of the terms "object" and "objective." All of the concretions of spirit are its 'objectifications' in which it knows itself, though not all belong to what Hegel denotes by the technical term "objective spirit [*objektives Geist*]." What specially distinguishes *objektives Geist* will become clear below.

dissertation is the anthropology, we are more concerned with subjective spirit than with objective and absolute spirit. Accordingly, we will spend the most time on subjective spirit. Furthermore, it is appropriate to give more attention to the section on subjective spirit because of the three parts of the philosophy of spirit, subjective spirit is, I believe, the most difficult to interpret and understand.

Subjective spirit is spirit in its immediacy, as an individual, existing, embodied human being. But let us be clear: there is much in the human being which, taken in abstraction, cannot be simply identified as “spirit.” For example, a human being ‘is’ or ‘has’ a body that takes up space, and has all manner of merely mechanical determinations; yet that which is merely mechanical is (to that extent) not spirit. The first chapter should have pre-emptively answered many objections of this kind: viz. those objections which raise characteristics of human beings which are manifestly unspiritual in an attempt to render problematic the very concept of subjective spirit. Spirit is the idea knowing itself in its externality to itself. Thus the individual human being is the immediate existence of spirit (or, subjective spirit) only in those respects which involve such self-knowledge.

Yet in such a condition of immediacy, the individual human being is only *implicitly (an sich)* spirit. This means that the individual human being is spirit for us: here ‘we’ are those who know what the abstract concept of spirit is, how it has concretized itself in individual human beings, and how individual human beings relate to the spheres of objective and absolute spirit. In other words, ‘we’ are the ones involved in this philosophical investigation. However, the object of our investigation (the human subject)

does not know itself as spirit in the same way that we know it as spirit.<sup>13</sup> When we consider in the human subject only what we have deduced as belonging to it at this stage (viz. the level of subjective spirit), the human individual has only what Hegel calls “certainty [*Gewissheit*]” of itself as spirit.

The “certainty” of itself as spirit that the human subject at this stage has is an *immediate awareness* of itself as spirit that does not involve knowledge of its own spiritual essence as an *object*. To say that the human being at this stage has only an immediate awareness of itself as spirit is the same as to say that in the individual human being, spirit exists *immediately*. What both of these mean is that at this level (viz. “subjective spirit”) spirit is considered apart from the relationships (i.e. the mediation) which its concept involves: this mediation is spirit’s mediation of itself with itself, which it carries out by objectifying its own self (i.e. distinguishing itself from itself) and then identifying with that objectified self from which it distinguished itself. Subjective spirit is thus not “subjective” in the sense of a subjectivity which envelops objectivity; rather, it

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<sup>13</sup> The reason why there is a distinction between what is ‘for us’ and what is ‘for’ the object of our investigation itself is that Hegel proceeds step by step in his *Encyclopedia*, deducing the various concretions of spirit one by one (see *EPW* §387A). (See p.71n for a remark on the use of the locution “for us” and p.101n for a remark on “deduction” in Hegel). He proceeds in this way to avoid having to adopt wholesale the ‘commonsense’ notions about what humanity is. Instead, he accepts only what he can deduce immediately from the previous stage. As an analogy, consider how in geometry one can consider abstractions like points, lines, and planes, which never actually exist on their own, but which can be examined and understood in themselves in thought. An exhaustive analysis of lines would reveal that lines cannot exist on their own, since a line is really only the limit of a plane (a moment of something more concrete). However, one can suspend this knowledge and simply investigate lines in their own right, discovering what necessary relations obtain when one simply regards lines as lines (and not as mere moments of something else). That is something similar to what Hegel is doing here: in truth, subjective spirit is an abstraction, as one discovers when they read through the whole philosophy of spirit. However, one can still investigate subjective spirit in its own right—indeed, it is through such an investigation that one deduces the sublation of (merely) subjective spirit from the very concept of subjective spirit.

excludes and is an abstraction from objectivity.<sup>14</sup> It is called “subjective spirit” because spirit is in this section considered merely formally, i.e. apart from its self-objectification.

It may therefore appear that subjective spirit has essentially the same content as the introductory remarks on “the concept of spirit”: that is, it may appear that subjective spirit concerns only the *abstract* concept of spirit. Indeed, it is true that the section on subjective spirit does concern spirit in a state of abstraction, apart from its self-objectification. Moreover, the section on subjective spirit culminates with a deduction of freedom as an abstract concept. This concept of freedom is presupposed at the beginning of the section on objective spirit, where it is concretized in the form of external, contingent historical existence, and fully realized in absolute spirit (which knows itself in this objectivity). Thus it can indeed be hard to distinguish between the purpose of §§381-384 (on the concept of spirit), and the purpose of §§387-482 (the section on subjective spirit): both are meant to present spirit and its essence (freedom) in abstraction from its objectification (and the absolute identity of spirit with this objectification). Yet the difference is clear if we consider that while §§381-384 simply give the formal essence of spirit, the section on subjective spirit concerns the minimal *concretion* of this essence in immediacy (even if subjective spirit does not always know itself as self-objectifying). Nowhere in subjective spirit is *spirit itself* objectified—at least not until free spirit (but this is the transition *out of* subjective and *into* objective spirit)—and to that extent subjective spirit remains formal. Yet even if spirit is not (in its essence as spirit) an object

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<sup>14</sup> See chapter two for a discussion of the meaning of “subjectivity” for Hegel, including a review of some of the recent secondary literature on the topic.



for itself in subjective spirit, *for us*<sup>15</sup> it is the immediate existence of spirit, and all that belongs to the concept of spirit can be discerned in subjective spirit implicitly.

I would dispute Michael Wolff's claim that the anthropology (the first section of subjective spirit) does not concern distinctly human phenomena, but rather "psychical and mental dispositions and activities in their dependence on material and physical conditions" which are shared with (non-human) animals.<sup>16</sup> In fact, in chapter four and five, when we turn to the anthropology in depth, I will show for every phenomenon we investigate, how it should *not* be considered as something merely natural, but rather as something spiritual appearing in nature. My argument against Wolff will therefore be given in the following chapters. Here however we may point out a flaw in Wolff's justification for his claim that the anthropology does not concern specifically human phenomena. Wolff argues that what is the *conditio sine qua non* for what is human in Hegel's view is social life:

Hegel gave an account of the non-occurrence of man in his 'anthropology' in the context of one place where the topic is the animal-human distinction. In §190A of the Philosophy of Right he says "the concretum of the *representation* that one calls *man*" can only be the theme "here from the standpoint of [social and socially produced] needs" and indeed "*only* [or first, "*erst*"] here." Hegel clearly means that what it means that man begins and constantly progresses from an original state of savagery and so "leaves [*hinauszugehen*]" the animal kingdom can only be understood as including the more defined, social and population-theoretical aspects of animal life. Man can only come to satisfy his needs in a simply pre-given, limited "circle of means and ways" [by being] among a particular, determinate population ruled by social conditions. In the anthropology, as mental dispositions and activities of only the *individual* living being are considered. Therefore a conceptual explanation of the distinction between

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<sup>15</sup> See p.71n for a remark on the use of the locution "for us."

<sup>16</sup> *Das Körper-Seele Problem* pp29-30

humans and animals cannot yet be expected here, insofar as this distinction shows a social aspect.<sup>17</sup>

However, if we were to take everything before ethical life, the third part of the section on objective spirit as pre-human, i.e. as concerning phenomena which humans share with animals (and hence which are not distinctly spiritual), we would be relegating the bulk of the philosophy of spirit to the philosophy of nature: the *whole* of subjective spirit (not just the anthropology section) concerns human individuals. If all of the phenomena treated in the phenomenology and psychology sections are shared with animals, then we would have to attribute to animals not only self-consciousness and reason, but even intelligent, syllogistic thought and a will. Moreover, the foundations for the discussion of social life that occupies the third part of objective spirit are laid not only in the part on subjective spirit, but in the anthropology specifically: it is there that *nationality* is deduced.<sup>18</sup> Are animals too organized into nations, then?

But let us leave this objection for now and continue with our outline of the philosophy of spirit. What follows is by no means an exhaustive account. We intend here to focus our attention on subjective spirit. Accordingly, we will discuss objective spirit and absolute spirit only insofar as such discussion is necessary to understand subjective spirit; and even the discussion of subjective spirit will proceed by reducing large portions of text to summaries, giving just enough information to make the general thrust of the section comprehensible.

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<sup>17</sup> *Das Körper-Seele Problem* pp.30-31.

<sup>18</sup> *EPW* §394.

## Subjective spirit

### *The soul*

First, we will discuss the soul. We have already noted that nature is the idea in the form of externality, and that the idea is spirit when it knows this externality to be its own self. As spirit is initially deduced, it is nothing more than the idea knowing nature generally to be its own self. This is the soul: spirit steeped in (i.e. for itself undifferentiated from) nature. Hegel also calls the soul “the sleep of spirit,”<sup>19</sup> likening it to the passive *nous* of Aristotle,<sup>20</sup> which is potentially all things: similarly, the soul is spirit’s undifferentiated presence throughout all of nature. Insofar as the soul thus pervades nature thoroughly, Hegel cautions us not to take the soul as an immaterial entity, separate from and externally related to corporeal nature.<sup>21</sup> Hence also we should not immediately think of the soul as an individual soul (bound and limited to a particular body): the individuation of the soul must be *deduced*. The soul’s individuation is deduced *for us* in §395,<sup>22</sup> but it is not until the end of the anthropology that the soul really knows itself to be an individual, limited to a particular body. We are used to thinking of the soul as the interiority of the individual human being: the individual’s most private and exclusive refuge, the storehouse of an individual’s feelings and thoughts, inaccessible to anyone else. Indeed, for Hegel the section on the soul does concern feelings: but for the

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<sup>19</sup> *EPW* §389.

<sup>20</sup> Inexplicably, Kirk Pillow has identified the soul not with the Aristotelian passive *nous*, but with “prime matter” (“Habituating Madness and Phantasying Art in Hegel’s *Encyclopedia*” p.184). Of course, not only is prime matter devoid of spirit, it is the most debased form of nature—to the extent that it can be accorded existence at all. However, for Hegel the soul is *spirit*, its immediate existence ‘in’ a body notwithstanding.

<sup>21</sup> *EPW* §389.

<sup>22</sup> See p.71n for a remark on the use of the locution “for us.”

soul, these feelings are not ‘within it.’ Rather, until the deduction of actual soul, the soul knows itself *in* and *as* its feelings: it does not know itself in distinction from these feelings, and hence does not know these feelings to be *its* feelings, contents over which it has power.

Not only does the feeling soul fail to know itself in distinction from its feelings, it also fails to have any inkling of ‘inner’ and ‘outer.’ This is another reason why Hegel calls the soul the sleep of spirit: for Hegel, sleep is precisely the loss of distinction between what is inner and what is outer.<sup>23</sup> Thus Hegel notes in his lectures that to sense only a monotonous sound or motion puts one to sleep, because the lack of a new, fresh content obliterates the distinction for the soul between inner and outer.<sup>24</sup> Hegel is concerned in the anthropology with hypnotism, madness, and various other sicknesses of the soul (some of very dubious credibility) because in these conditions the human subject, though normally much more complex and sophisticated, regresses to a soul-like state, where all distinction between inner and outer is effaced. Thus under hypnosis the patient is willing to divulge whatever information the hypnotist requires, though if awake, when the distinction between inner and outer is clear for the soul, the patient would refuse to ‘externalize’ certain ‘inner’ contents (such as painful memories).

In cases of madness there is a similar regression to a soul-like state. Accordingly, the madman holds beliefs that reflect his own certainty of himself as soul, but also the absence or suppression of further spiritual developments (e.g. habit, consciousness, self-

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<sup>23</sup> *EPW* §398.

<sup>24</sup> *EPW* §398Z.

consciousness, reason, will, etc.).<sup>25</sup> Thus the madman is certain of himself as spirit, and hence as the truth of all of nature, which he considers to be under his control; or he takes himself to be in a distant land or time. Generally, the madman knows himself as soul (the self-knowing spirit indifferently present throughout nature) but does not know that (since he is, for us if not for himself,<sup>26</sup> a particular, determinate human being) he is confined to a *determinate* time and place, living in a *determinate* body, and to that extent is not identical with the “universal soul.”<sup>27</sup>

The anthropology terminates in “actual soul.” Here the soul knows itself as existing immediately in individual souls, and thus knows that as *individual* soul it is not indifferently present throughout nature. Rather, the soul posits the particularity of its own body. The soul thus knows itself as present throughout its whole body (the distinctions between the parts of its body being nothing for the soul), but because of the necessary determinacy of any body, the soul has access to the rest of nature only by mediation of its *particular* body. Therefore the soul (the first concretion of the concept of spirit) is initially determined as the idea knowing itself in its objectification (viz. nature generally); as actual soul it is spirit knowing itself in a *determinate part* of nature (viz. an individual human body) *as determinate*.

### *Consciousness*

Thus the actual soul is no longer spirit immersed in nature, unaware of the conflict between its unity and the diversity of nature. Rather, the actual soul posits itself

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<sup>25</sup> EPW §408&A.

<sup>26</sup> See p.71n for a remark on the use of the locution “for us.”

<sup>27</sup> EPW §391.

as realized in *this particular* body—in this way spirit *reveals itself* in immediate corporeal existence. Since the soul now knows itself as the soul of a particular, circumscribed body, and distinguishes this body from others (which it is *not*), it is no longer simply steeped in nature. Rather, it can take a part of nature (e.g. *another* body, which it is *not*) as its determinate object: i.e. the soul is *consciousness*.<sup>28</sup>

As the soul is initially determined as spirit knowing itself in externality without distinguishing itself from this externality, consciousness is spirit knowing an external object without knowing this object to be itself. Over the course of the phenomenology, spirit will come to know itself as “reason,” the identity of subject and object (insofar as both are ruled by the same rationality, i.e. insofar as the determinations of reason in the subject are the same as the determinations of reason in the object).<sup>29</sup> The intervening stage between consciousness and reason is self-consciousness. Consciousness is already implicitly self-consciousness because spirit’s knowledge of itself is necessarily involved (if not in fact thematized) in the knowledge of the distinction between itself and the object. When spirit thus becomes conscious of itself as an object, it is self-consciousness.<sup>30</sup> We can see here the concept of spirit concretized in self-consciousness insofar as this concept involves spirit making itself into an object for itself (and this is precisely what self-consciousness does). The other moment of the concept is spirit’s recognition of this object as its own self, i.e. its recognition of the identity of subject and object: this is concretized as reason.

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<sup>28</sup> *EPW* §413.

<sup>29</sup> *EPW* §438.

<sup>30</sup> *EPW* §424.

To understand the transition from reason to the psychology section, we must understand two things: (1) subjective spirit generally is characterized as presupposing a world before it (*Vorfinden einer Welt als einer vorausgesetzt*), in contrast to objective spirit which creates a world as its own positing (*als einer von ihm gesetzt*), and absolute spirit which is the liberation in and from the world<sup>31</sup>; (2) reason is implicitly self-determining. To fully grasp either of these points is to grasp the other as well. Let us begin by examining the first.

Subjective spirit is characterized by its presupposition of a world before it. This is clearly true of the natural soul and feeling soul: only at the close of the anthropology does the soul even know itself as something distinct from the natural world as a whole. That the actual soul too presupposes a world before it is proved by the phenomenology. We have already remarked that spirit as actual soul is carried over into the phenomenology as consciousness. Consciousness is consciousness of an object: to be sure, consciousness distinguishes itself from this object, but even in doing so, it shows itself to presuppose it, insofar as consciousness remains only a *relation to* this object. Over the course of the phenomenology, spirit remains merely “subjective”: it even reproduces its relation to the object in its relation to its own self. Self-consciousness is not an immediate, relationless insight on the part of the self into itself: it is the self’s *consciousness* of its own self. Recall, consciousness is the self’s knowledge of what is for it *objective*: thus self-

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<sup>31</sup> *EPW* §386. Of course, this should not be taken to mean that subjective spirit is somehow *worldless*. Subjective spirit is always in a world, but insofar as it is *merely* subjective, it does not know that this world is something spirit ‘sets before’ itself only to realize itself in it (though again, this ‘setting before’ should not be taken in a spatial sense).

consciousness is the self's making itself (as *consciousness*) into an object for itself.

This object is of course the self itself, and this (identity) is posited by spirit as reason.

Insofar as consciousness makes its own self into a determinate object (as self-consciousness) and knows this object as its own self (as reason), then spirit is here (as reason) *determining itself*, even if at this stage it does not know itself as self-determining. In other words, reason (*Vernunft*) is (for us, if not for itself) *self-determining*. It is hazardous to venture to draw a connection between one part of Hegel's text and the work of a previous philosopher, since he so rarely mentions other philosophers: the two paragraphs devoted to reason are no exception in this respect. Yet if we attend carefully to what reason is in the context of the concept of spirit, and subjective spirit's relation to objective spirit, it will be clear that in his understanding of reason, Hegel retrieves a certain aspect of Kant's articulation of reason: viz., that reason is self-determining.

Reason is *explicitly* only the identity of subject and object (the same rationality present in human consciousness and the natural world): but, familiar as we are with the concept of spirit, we are able to discern the self-determining character which is only implicit in reason as it is presented in §§438-439. By our reading of the consciousness and self-consciousness sections (guided by our grasp of the concept of spirit) we know that the subject (as consciousness) has objectified its own self (in self-consciousness), and (as reason) knows the identity of itself and the object: i.e. the subject knows its objectification to be its own self—but this means only that it is *self-determining*.<sup>32</sup> In the

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<sup>32</sup> This is how we should understand it when Hegel says that "reason [...] is the *substance* as well as the *infinite power*, the *infinite material* of all natural and spiritual life, and the *infinite form*, the actualization of which is its content [*die Vernunft ... die Substanz wie die unendliche Macht, sich selbst der unendliche Stoff alles natürlichen und geistigen Lebens wie die unendliche Form, die Betätigung dieses ihres Inhalt*]



psychology section this self-determination becomes explicit; and it is because this self-determination is posited in the psychology section that Hegel says that it concerns neither the mere soul, nor consciousness, but rather *spirit* (though still only finite, subjective spirit). That spirit as reason is implicitly self-determining and that in the psychology section spirit will become explicitly self-determining (i.e. self-determining for itself) indicates that in reason (implicitly) and in the psychology section (explicitly) spirit begins to cease to *presuppose* a world before it, showing itself rather as creating its own world as its own positing (i.e. its own determination of itself). That is, we begin at this stage to make the transition from subjective spirit to objective spirit.

*Thought, will, free spirit*

The first section of the psychology is theoretical spirit, which culminates in thought (*Denken*), which is spirit as explicitly self-determining. There are three moments of thought: understanding (*Verstand*), judgment (*Urteil*), and syllogism (*Schluß*), the last of which is self-determining thought. The problem driving theoretical spirit throughout is how the general image that is the possession of intelligence (something like what Kant calls a concept) relates to the externally received intuition. This problem is inherited from reason as it is articulated at the end of the phenomenology insofar as there the rationality of the subject's general representations are posited as 'identical' with the rationality of the many discrete, particular objects outside of the subject. The incongruity implicit in this 'identity' (viz. that subjective contents are general and indeterminate, while the

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*ist]*"(*VPGes* pp.20-21). That reason is not only substance but infinite power means that this 'substance' realizes itself in determinacy. This determinate realization is "the infinite material of all natural and spiritual life." That the infinite form's actualization is its content likewise indicates that reason is not merely formal with its content outside of it: rather, it actualizes itself in its content.

objects are always *this* or *that* discrete object) is developed over the sections on intuition and representation. Thought resolves this incongruity by showing spirit to be ‘self-determining as syllogism’ (the meaning of this will become clear below). Let us go through the moments of thought one by one.

Mere understanding is the most inadequate form of thought: it accepts the external intuition only insofar as it agrees with the subject’s own general thoughts. Ostensibly, it is the subjective,<sup>33</sup> general thought which is the criterion for the truth of the particular, intuited object: the former is ostensibly the essential, while the latter is inessential. Yet if this is accurate, then the bare particularity of the intuited object would fall outside of the subjective thought, which would thus be shown to be finite and incomplete. Accordingly, thought that remains on the level of the mere *Verstand* hardly deserves to be called thought at all.

Judgment succeeds the mere understanding<sup>34</sup> by expressing the relation of the subjective universal to the singular content itself, though this relation is represented as something merely immediate (e.g. “S is P”). Formal understanding in contrast would not state that a particular intuited object is a predicate: rather, the understanding and its general thought (the predicate) would only recognize in the intuited object what agrees with the general, subjective thought. The understanding’s subjective thought thus

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<sup>33</sup> “Subjective” here is of course meant in the sense that is *opposed* to objectivity, not as embracing it. See chapter two for an explanation of this term.

<sup>34</sup> To be sure, judgment can be seen as a form of understanding, insofar as both involve the opposition of a general, subjective thought and a particular intuition. The difference however (as I show in what follows) is that *mere* understanding takes the general, subjective thought recognizes only itself as the truth, and recognizes the intuited particular as legitimate only in its universality; judgment on the other hand is an explicit *determination* of the generality employed by the understanding, an assertion that *this particular* ‘is’ the general thought (as its predicate).

communes only with itself, and forces the particularity of the intuited object to fall outside of it. Judgment on the other hand unites the universal thought (as predicate) with the singular (subject), but due to its immediacy, judgment is unstable: it is a union between a subject and predicate, but it is also at its very heart a disjunction between the two. That is, judgment (*Urteil*) is an original (*ur-*) division (*Teilung*): the immediate union it asserts between a universal predicate and a singular subject does not overcome their enduring disparity. Thus while it is true that “S is P,” it is also true that “Q [another intuited particular] is P.” Yet the first intuited particular (S) is different from the second (Q): i.e. it is clear that “S is not Q,” and therefore (since Q is indeed P in some sense) that “S is not P.” Thus in judgment, subject and predicate are divided even as they are united.

The instability of judgment, its self-undermining character, is resolved by syllogism (*Schluss*), which we might say closes (*schließt*) the gap that is left between subject and predicate by their original division (*ur-Teilung*), or judgment. The syllogism effects this closure by positing an “objective particular”<sup>35</sup>: i.e. a determination that is internal to the universal predicate itself, and which is shared by the singular subject. To posit the objective particular here in the psychology’s “thought” section is to posit the universal, i.e. reason, as self-determining.<sup>36</sup> As an example, Hegel gives a red rose.<sup>37</sup> The

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<sup>35</sup> *EPW* §180. This citation and the term “objective particular” of course belong to the *Wissenschaft der Logik*. Judgment and syllogism are not only concrete psychological phenomena, but ontological categories. This will be addressed below.

<sup>36</sup> To be sure, reason in §§438-439 is not represented as self-determining: but we have already addressed how self-determination is implicit in it. Moreover, Hegel identifies the syllogism itself as *formelle Vernunft* (formal reason) and as *schließender Verstand* (syllogistic understanding) in §467. Thus the section of thought demonstrates that *reason itself* is self-determining: it is not as if the human mind is a hodge-podge of different faculties, a “soul-sack” containing reason, thought, will, memory, etc. The human mind is *one* (though it is internally articulated into distinct powers), and this *single* mind is self-determining (though this self-determination is more adequately expressed in some powers than in others).

individual plant is the singular term, while “colored” is the universal, such that to say “this rose is colored” would be to understand the rose in the manner of *judgment*.<sup>38</sup> It is true that the rose is colored, and that color is present in the rose (i.e. the singular and universal are somehow united); indeed, the rose cannot but be colored, and color is nothing if it is not present in actual singular things like this rose. Yet despite this connection, there is certainly an incongruity between singular and universal as such: the singular has a determinacy that the universal seems not to have (insofar as the rose is not colored in general, but rather this *particular* color, viz. red). This incongruity becomes apparent in the following contradiction: this rose here is colored; that rose there is colored; but if the first is red, and the second is white, and we fail to *posit* this particularity in each, then we must conclude that the universal (color) is different from *itself*. This problem is irresolvable if one understands the rose only as a judgment, failing to see it syllogistically, i.e. failing to mediate the universal-singular relation by positing the *particularity* of the rose’s coloredness (that it is *red*), and positing that this particularity is immanent in the universal (coloredness).<sup>39</sup>

The significance of this mediation is not that a new ‘thing’ (red) has been introduced in between the singular rose and the universal coloredness (as if these were two separate ‘things’), but rather the positing that the universal is determined *within its*

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<sup>37</sup> *EPW* §183Z.

<sup>38</sup> To be sure, judgment for Hegel (in these sections from the logic) is not a combination of words, but rather the *ontological* determination of a thing. For the purposes of explanation however, it is expedient to represent judgments linguistically (as a combination of words). Thus what we mean in saying “to say ‘this rose is colored’ would be to understand the rose in the manner of *judgment*” is that we would then be understanding this object as if it were a judgment (in the proper ontological meaning of the word).

<sup>39</sup> *EPW* §§179-180.

*own self*, such that its presence in a determinate singular is not an inexplicable, monstrous combination of incommensurate elements of different orders.<sup>40</sup> Instead, Hegel wants to show that the universal ‘color’ already contains within it the particularity (of the various different colors), and that it is by the singular’s union with the particular (viz. that this rose is red) that the singular is united with the universal (i.e. that this rose is colored).

It is not only red roses that are syllogisms. The terms of the syllogism are the moments of the concept itself<sup>41</sup> and since everything in nature and spirit is the idea,<sup>42</sup> the moments of the concept (which are also the terms of the syllogism, viz. universal, particular, and singular) are found throughout the *Encyclopedia*. Indeed, the whole of the *Encyclopedia* can be understood as one long parade of syllogisms. These syllogisms not only follow each other sequentially, they also supersede each other, with one syllogistic phenomenon constituting a single term for a more comprehensive syllogism.

When we made three points above about the self-revelation of spirit, and said in the third that the concept of spirit is concretized in *different ways* throughout the philosophy of spirit, we meant that the philosophy of spirit exhibits a variety of syllogisms, which relate to each other in the ways just described. We will see how this is articulated in the anthropology in chapters four and five. At this point however it is clear that insofar as it is only soul, spirit does not know itself in its particularity, i.e. does not know itself as inwardly determined. As we will see, the distortions of spirit which are

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<sup>40</sup> For example, if we consider a universal to be a sort of ethereal Platonic idea, and a singular object to be mundane and corporeal, and hence of a different order, the inherence of the universal ‘in’ this singular becomes inexplicable. Hegel’s solution to this problem is to show that particularity is *immanent* in the universal.

<sup>41</sup> *EPW* §§164-166.

<sup>42</sup> *EPW* §§247, 381.

featured in the anthropology section (e.g. madness) are rooted in spirit's failure to posit its own particularity, and the anthropology culminates in spirit's positing of its own particularity for itself (in the form of its own determinate body).

The consciousness of the phenomenology section thus presupposes the positing of this particular corporeity, but consciousness does not know this (objective) corporeity as its own (subjective) self. As self-consciousness, it turns its gaze toward its own self and (*for us*) makes itself into an object; and as reason it knows the "identity" of this subject and object, though it does not know that the subject determines its own self, i.e. that the subject realizes its own self in objectivity. Spirit posits itself as self-determining only as syllogistic thought: syllogism is thus given by name as a concrete spiritual phenomenon only when spirit knows its own self to be syllogistic.

At the conclusion of theoretical spirit, what in reason was only a vague "identity" between existence and thought, has been posited as thought's realization of itself, thought's giving existence to itself—this is the *will*.<sup>43</sup> However, the will, existing immediately, may have a content (a *determinate* end) that is different from itself. In thought spirit is deduced as self-determining, and as *knowing* this self-determination to be its essence; but the individual will still exists in a world which affects it in various ways, and thus this self-determinacy is initially only a *demand* that the will determine its content. In the first concretion of the will (as practical feeling), things are simply felt as pleasant or unpleasant (i.e. as agreeing or disagreeing with the thinking will's own inner determinacy): that is, the will knows that the world *ought* to agree with it (to please it), but its own inward determinacy (in virtue of which things are experienced as pleasant or

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<sup>43</sup> *EPW* §468.

unpleasant) is at first accepted unreflectively as a matter of course.<sup>44</sup> By positing its feelings as distinct, and not necessarily in agreement with each other (much less with the will itself), the will becomes aware of itself as something distinct from its own drives.<sup>45</sup>

Here we can see a telescoping series of syllogisms. What in thought was an entire syllogism (finite spirit knowing itself as self-determining) is in practical feeling only an immediacy, a feeling of pleasure or a feeling of displeasure. This practical feeling still has a syllogistic structure: it is still thought knowing that it is self-determining and thus that the world *ought* to agree with it. Yet, in the practical spirit section, this whole syllogism (expressed as an immediacy in practical feeling) is brought into relation with a *universal* (*Willkür*, choice), with respect to which it is a mere *singular* impulse (without ceasing to be a complete syllogism in its own right from a narrower perspective).

The chance agreement or disagreement between a practical feeling and the world is no longer the issue: what matters now is the agreement or disagreement between this feeling (here determined as *impulse*) and the will (here as *Willkür*). The will would find satisfaction in each impulse taken singly, though no single impulse would satisfy the *Willkür* totally, insofar as it is a universal. Each impulse is thus presented to the *Willkür* as something that *may* be adopted, or *may* be forsaken. But if each singular impulse is something contingent and arbitrary, then the *Willkür* (which has nothing but these impulses) is itself arbitrary: adopting one impulse and rejecting others for no good

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<sup>44</sup> *EPW* §§471-472.

<sup>45</sup> *EPW* §476.

reason.<sup>46</sup> The only thing the impulses have in common is their relation to *Willkür*. The *Willkür*, for its part, is itself nothing but a relation to these impulses: that is, the *Willkür* receives all of its content from these impulses, without which it would be totally empty. We might express the *Willkür*'s emptiness by saying that 'it has no will of its own,' being able to choose only from among the impulses furnished from outside of itself.

It seems therefore that there is on one side a disorganized mass of determinate impulses, and on the other a completely indeterminate *Willkür*. However, since the *Willkür* is nothing in itself, but is only really a certain *relation* to its impulses, then the *Willkür* cannot without disingenuousness be treated as something separate from the impulses and their determinacy. The *Willkür*'s indeterminacy is only illusory: in truth, it must be recognized as *inwardly determinate*. That is, practical spirit must at this point be recognized as containing within it a determinate content; moreover, practical spirit does not relate to this content as it relates to its other impulses, i.e. it does not will this inner content only ambivalently. This recognition of the *Willkür* as inwardly determinate is the positing of an 'objective particular' immanent in the *Willkür*'s universality. This objective particular is *happiness*: the determinate organization of impulses that the will authorizes.<sup>47</sup> That happiness is the 'objective particular' of the *Willkür* itself (and not an externally received impulse) means that no matter what particular impulse the *Willkür* finds satisfaction in at a given moment, it always wills its own happiness, and wills that particular impulse only insofar as it promotes a larger conception of the happy life.

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<sup>46</sup> *EPW* §478.

<sup>47</sup> *EPW* §§479-480.



Once we posit that the *Willkür* is inwardly determinate, we encounter the stylistic problem of whether we should continue to call it *Willkür*. On the one hand, the meaning of “*Willkür*” as the indeterminate, arbitrary faculty of choice has been conventional since Kant—and Hegel accepts this convention. Like Kant however, Hegel wants to show that the will properly speaking (the *Wille*) is not indeterminate or arbitrary in this way. Yet the way that Hegel goes about showing this, is by deducing the necessity of the will’s inward determinacy by analysis of the concept of *Willkür* itself: thus it would not be totally incorrect to say that the *Willkür* is inwardly determinate—but we should add that once we understand the *Willkür* in this way, it is customary to call it *Wille* rather than *Willkür*.

When we understand the will as inwardly determinate in this way (i.e. as always willing the *determinate* goal of happiness as its objective particular), we can see that in willing happiness the will does not will an externally given end. That happiness is the will’s objective particular means that happiness is the particular term that was always immanent in the will, though it was not always so recognized; and in willing its own immanent end, the will wills only itself. Not only does the will will itself in willing happiness, but also in willing certain *singular* contents that fit into its conception of happiness: the singular content is united with the universal will by the particular conception of happiness (this is the syllogism between the three terms). Thus the determinacy of its particular conception of happiness belongs to the will itself; and to the extent that a singular impulse fits into this organization, it is united with the will (i.e. it is willed to that extent). When the will recognizes this conception of happiness (the

objective particular) as the determination of its own self, then it is *free spirit*,<sup>48</sup> the will (self-determining thought) willing itself.<sup>49</sup>

An example may help. Considered on the (more abstract) level of thought, a person simply knows himself as self-determining spirit, and thus has a demand that the world present itself as agreeable to him. Different things excite pleasure and pain in this person, and he accordingly finds himself with a variety of impulses which do not necessarily agree with each other, nor with the concrete situation in which he finds himself (his time and place, his financial means, the mores of his community, etc.). This person will likely find that, while taken singly, an impulse for living luxuriously (spending lavishly, eating fine foods, wearing expensive clothes, etc.) promises to be quite pleasant. Yet, supposing this person also has an impulse to go to graduate school and study philosophy, he will find that these two impulses cannot both be satisfied. Graduate study in philosophy requires an intense commitment that makes it impossible to hold a well-paying job (which is necessary for a luxurious life). This person must therefore fashion for himself a particular conception of happiness, which may include the satisfaction of *one* of these impulses but not of the other (though either is also compatible with the satisfaction of many other impulses not here listed). Only this organization of impulses (the happy life chosen by this particular person), and not any single impulse, is the proper object for the will: i.e. it is in a particular conception of happiness that the will determines itself, not in any one impulse.

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<sup>48</sup> *EPW* §480.

<sup>49</sup> *EPW* §481.

But the individual should also be at peace with the life he has chosen: if our graduate student pines away in his heart for a life of luxury, then though the objective conditions of his life (viz. that he spends his days studying philosophy) are enviable, he is not free. Moreover, he is probably a mediocre philosopher, since he has not understood what Hegel calls “free spirit.” As free spirit, the alterity of this determinate particularization of the will is cancelled, as the individual wills it as his own will. Our graduate student must therefore will not just the satisfaction of the singular impulse to study philosophy, but the whole life he has chosen (i.e. his particular conception of happiness), which includes living in modest circumstances. Or, he should fashion for himself another internally consistent conception of happiness and will that.

Thus what was at the end of theoretical spirit a syllogism in its own right is integrated into a more comprehensive syllogism in free spirit. The syllogism of self-determining thought becomes a singular term in the syllogism uniting the (universal) will with the (singular) practical feeling or impulse by mediation of the (particular) conception of happiness. At this point subjective spirit comes to its closure (*Schluß*). This syllogism (*Schluß*) however, the will willing itself, will be only the singular term of a yet *higher* syllogism, deduced in *objective spirit*: there the (universal) nation-state will be united with the (singular) free will through its (particular) family and work association. However, even *this* syllogism (the nation mediating its relation to the individual free will by the other ethical institutions) will be superseded and rendered only a singular term of the philosophy of spirit’s final syllogism: absolute spirit (the universal) united with the (singular) nation by realizing itself in the determinate process of world-history (in which

the nation-state has a role). Let us turn therefore to Hegel's analysis of objective and absolute spirit.

### Objective and absolute spirit

#### *The course of objective spirit and absolute spirit*

The function of the section on objective spirit is to deduce spirit's objectification of its own self, the determinacy in which spirit realizes its own self and in which (as absolute spirit) it knows its own self: viz., the state. As we mentioned earlier, a cursory reading of the section on objective spirit may give the impression that while the section on subjective spirit concerned the individual human being, the section on objective spirit concerns the *relations* between *many* human beings. Yet the transition from the one to the other makes no sense if one thinks of it as involving simply the unprompted quantitative increase in the object under investigation. Rather, objective spirit must be understood as spirit's positing of a world for itself, its realization of its own self in determinacy, knowing itself as an object.

To be sure, throughout the section on subjective spirit, spirit objectified itself in some sense,<sup>50</sup> and knew itself in this objectivity to a certain extent. Yet Hegel calls that section *subjective* spirit rather than *objective* spirit precisely because in subjective spirit, spirit's objectification is not adequate to its concept. For spirit's objectification to be adequate to its concept, spirit would have to give itself existence, and this determinate existence would have to be self-determining, and know itself as such. Only the state meets these criteria. In subjective spirit's culmination as free spirit, spirit does know itself as thought giving itself determinacy and willing this determinacy as its own self.

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<sup>50</sup> For example, in habits (*EPW* §§409-410).

However, the individual human being is quite simply incapable of giving spirit itself objective existence, as the section on objective spirit demonstrates.

The section on objective spirit begins with abstract right. Here, the individual person first realizes himself as spirit in the immediate form of a mere thing which is rendered his *property*. But by making spirit (here determined as personality) exist in externality, personality therefore takes on the characteristics of externality (viz. being outside of itself). Since in property spirit (or, here, personality) becomes other to itself, the relation between a person and his property is reformulated as a relation between a person and *another* person.<sup>51</sup> This does not mean that one person owns another, but only that the concept of personality (and its realization in externality in the form of property) has been shown to have an unacknowledged determinacy. This determinacy first appears as simply a duplication of personality: the presence of another person. The transition from subjective to objective spirit thus involves a quantitative increase in the object under investigation only because: (1) spirit is deduced (in the psychology section) as self-determining; (2) this self-determination initially involves the realization of spirit as an external thing; (3) such self-externalization means that personality is other to itself.

The aim of course is that personality should cease to be other to itself, i.e. that each of the different persons should know himself in the other, knowing the other as spirit of his spirit. On the level of abstract right however, persons relate to each other only through the medium of things (viz., their property). To be sure, the medium is not a *mere* thing, but rather property: a thing imbued with personality, a spiritualized thing. Yet insofar as it remains an externally existing thing, it has an irreducible ambiguity. As

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<sup>51</sup> *EPW* §490.

thing, it does not declare itself to be the property of a certain person. The thing has no personality in its own right, and thus cannot distinguish its own external existence from its spiritual aspect, its being-owned. Indeed, this inability on the part of the thing is precisely what justifies the person in taking possession of it. Yet the owned thing consequently requires *another* person to recognize it as the property of its owner.<sup>52</sup> However, because this other person may or may not recognize it as the property of another (and may even take possession of it himself), what is required is the objectification of spirit in a medium other than external thinghood.<sup>53</sup>

The piece of property thus truly embodies personality insofar as it even reflects its inadequacy: both the property and the person are the merely immediate existence of right (or law, *Recht*). Yet the course of abstract right shows that the universal moment (the law as such) must be distinguished from the subjective will in which it has existence.<sup>54</sup> In action, spirit is articulated into a universal moral standard and the moral subject who has this standard in himself as his own standard, which he intends. Because the moral subject's end is something universal, the willing of this end is divested of the involvement in externality that characterized property. However, willing is only a part of action, which also requires execution. Thus action remains action in an external world with all sorts of contingencies and intervening factors. The moral will is involved in this externality (as far as the execution of its end is concerned), but even in the execution of

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<sup>52</sup> *EPW* §491; *GPR* §§40, 71.

<sup>53</sup> *EPW* §495.

<sup>54</sup> *EPW* §502.

the act, the moral will recognizes only that in its act which belongs to his intention (which is in agreement with the universal standard).<sup>55</sup>

There is thus a dichotomy between the intended pure moral end and the various externals of the act. Moreover, these two sides are not mediated: there is nothing in the command to will ‘the good’ and do ‘what is right’ that allows for a sure determination into concrete actions. Instead, this determination is left to arbitrary subjectivity (as conscience).<sup>56</sup> Therefore spirit, in the form of the moral subject, is not able to determine its own self in an action (i.e. moral action is not an adequate objectification of spirit itself), and hence nor is spirit able to know itself in its deed (i.e. the reality of the act is not equal to the intention).

What is needed is a better way to determine the abstract “good.” The moral subject is unable to introduce the not yet existent “good” into reality all of the sudden, like a traveler without baggage. Yet this is not a genuine problem, because such a heroic feat is not actually necessary: it is neither the responsibility nor the prerogative generally of the individual to bring what is right to bear on a world hitherto alien to all goodness. Rather, every individual is always already a member of a nation with its own national spirit (which is a particular concretion of the concept of spirit): this national spirit has its own history and its own standards of conduct, i.e. its own cultural stock of conventional responses to the diverse situations in which individuals typically find themselves.<sup>57</sup> The

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<sup>55</sup> *EPW* §503.

<sup>56</sup> *EPW* §§508, 511; *GPR* §§115, 117-118, 123.

<sup>57</sup> *EPW* §514.

individual may thus adopt those responses,<sup>58</sup> and thereby avoid having to determine the universal good on his own for the first time in history. While as moral subject the individual was helpless to bridge the gulf separating his intention, what he means in his act, from the reality of the act, as member of a national community the individual need not worry that the reality of the act will misrepresent his intention. The national culture and history have already established for all members of the nation which deeds reveal which intentions.

Let us consider an example. The American spirit holds up self-reliance as a virtue (perhaps to an excessive degree). Thus if one American offers another a gift or favor, and the latter refuses and protests, the former will not be insulted: he will understand that the other is being polite according to American standards by showing a certain degree of reluctance to accept and thereby deprive him of something or inconvenience him. Likewise, the one who is offered the gift or favor understands that if the other insists and reiterates the offer, it would be impolite not to accept, even if he does not need what is offered. Another culture may have different standards of decorum regarding exchanges of gifts and favors.

Indeed, there is wide variety between cultures on the meaning of such deeds, or how to appropriately determine intentions in reality: witness the difference in attitudes across cultures with respect to dress, food, displays of affection, physical contact and

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<sup>58</sup> The situation becomes more complicated when we bring absolute spirit into consideration: as philosopher, the individual can (indeed, must) take a critical stance with regard to the values and mores of his time and place. However, at the stage of spirit under examination here, it is necessary only to see the historical emergence of national cultures as the “objective particular” mediating between the universal good and the individual agent. We will deal with absolute spirit (and the obligations of the individual insofar as he concretizes absolute spirit) below.



personal space, etc. Yet *within* a certain culture, the gap between intention and deed (i.e. their 'original division') has been 'closed (*schließt*)': thus there is no serious threat of spirit failing to recognize itself in its objectification of itself.

Let us take another example. A Japanese person would be insulted if someone entered his home without removing his shoes: the Japanese often sit on the floor, and to continue to wear one's shoes in another's home (i.e. this deed in its external reality) is interpreted as the failure to acknowledge that one has entered the home of another, i.e. it is to fail to respect the domain imbued with the personality of another. On the other hand, Americans rarely or never sit on the floor. Consequently, among Americans, wearing shoes is simply considered part of being fully dressed. Therefore an American only removes his shoes in his own home (and even wears shoes in his own home when he has guests over, as a sign of respect). To remove one's shoes is for an American a sign of extreme informality; consequently, to remove one's shoes in an American's home (without having been invited to take this liberty) would be to fail to show due regard for one's host.

Thus in different cultures, the very same deed indicates vastly different things, i.e. reveals (*offenbart*) vastly different intentions. Yet in the absence of distinct cultures, intention and deed would remain in a tense state of judgment: the union between the two would thus be loose and unstable; the deed would be irreducibly ambiguous; consequently it would be impossible for spirit to recognize itself in its deed. The national culture (with its customs and traditions) is the objective particular which allows the moral subject's (universal) good will to be realized in a (singular) deed.

Hegel discusses national culture in the final moment of objective spirit, which he calls “*Sittlichkeit*.” “Ethical life” is the generally accepted translation of *Sittlichkeit*. “*Sittlichkeit*” comes from “*Sitten*,” which are the customs and mores that constitute the social life of a people or a nation (though *Sittlichkeit* includes also the family and civil society). *Sittlichkeit* (which could thus also be translated as “convention”) denotes a culture into which an individual is born, and of which, through *paideia* or *Bildung*, that individual grows to be the expression. These *Sitten* can become objects of reflection for an individual; but even—and perhaps especially—if they are not, they are effective in shaping the behavior and outlook of the individual through his lifelong habituation to them. “Ethical life” is the preferred translation because it connotes the Greek *ethos*, which means both the shared life of a nation or a people, and habituation. The highest form of ethical life is the state (*Staat*). While *Staat* does refer to the particular, immediately existing nation-state, it most properly refers to world history: the transnational realization of freedom in the world over the course of several epochs. It is the state, above all as world history, which is spirit’s (i.e. the absolute’s, God’s) realization of its own self in determinacy. That is, the state is spirit’s revelation—not of *something*, but of *itself*.<sup>59</sup>

A glance back at the schematic representation of the philosophy of spirit will also show that absolute spirit has three moments: art, religion, and philosophy. As absolute spirit, spirit grasps its self-objectification in determinacy (i.e. the state) as its own self.

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<sup>59</sup> „er [i.e. spirit] *nicht* Etwas *offenbart*, sondern seine *Bestimmtheit und Inhalt ist dieses Offenbaren selbst* [it does not reveal *something*, but rather its determinacy and content is the revelation itself]“ (*EPW* §383). For our analysis of the abstract concept of spirit, including this passage describing spirit’s revelation of itself, see chapter two.

Art (which means fine art, not technical production) is spirit's knowing of itself in intuition; revealed religion is spirit's knowing of itself in feeling and representation; and philosophy is spirit's knowing of itself in the form most proper to it, viz., thought. In absolute spirit, spirit thus reappropriates its objectified self: i.e. absolute spirit takes finite spirit (the state, objective spirit) back into itself. Indeed, absolute spirit reunites itself with finite spirit generally: therefore not only is objective spirit reunited with the absolute, but subjective spirit is as well. Individual human beings, though finite, have a role in absolute spirit: not insofar as they are finite, but insofar as they are spirit. Thus spirit proper (God) intuitively itself in the (individual human) aesthete (the one who enjoys beautiful art). Likewise, in the religious feeling of the individual human believer, God feels and represents to himself his own self; and in the thought of the individual human philosopher, God thinks his own self, thereby completely and adequately knowing himself. In each of these forms (but most adequately in philosophy), spirit (by way of individual, human, finite, subjective spirit) knows its determination of itself in reality (as objective spirit) to be its own self. That is, absolute spirit is spirit's comprehension that in its revelation of its own self as objective spirit, it has revealed itself *to itself*.

We may note here that since absolute spirit is spirit knowing itself in its objectification of itself; and spirit's objectification of itself is the state, above all as world history, it is clear that an individual's obligations to his own individual nation-state are qualified. The perfect objectification of spirit is not this or that nation-state, but only world history. Seen from this perspective, the defects in one's own nation-state may become apparent. Thus although morality (as it is articulated as the second form of

objective spirit) is inadequate to concretize spirit and must be understood as only a moment of *Sittlichkeit* (i.e. the moral will as it is conceived in objective spirit must be subordinated to national laws), it is possible for an individual to legitimately reject the customs of his time and place: viz., if this individual does so from insight gained through beautiful art, religion, or philosophy.

We noted above that in distinguishing subjective, objective, and absolute spirit, Hegel says that subjective spirit presupposes a world before it, while objective spirit posits a world as its own creation, and absolute spirit is spirit's liberation in and from the world. It is now clear that by knowing this objectivity (viz. the world which it posited for itself) to be its own self, and cancelling its alterity (spirit's knowing of this object as its own self), spirit liberates itself *from* the world (insofar as the world then ceases to be something *merely* objective, standing against spirit); yet insofar as spirit does this through the feeling or thought of the individual human being, its liberation from the world takes place in and as the world.

*The interrelations of subjective, objective, and absolute spirit*

Now that we have given a basic outline of the philosophy of spirit, let us turn once again to subjective spirit in order to articulate its essence with greater precision. Thought, will, and free spirit are the culmination of the section on subjective spirit because they give the most full presentation of the concept of spirit possible in merely *subjective* spirit (i.e. spirit in abstraction from its self-objectification in reality; or, spirit insofar as it presupposes a world before it rather than positing a world of its own making). In syllogistic thought, the most developed form of thought, it is posited or

comprehended that the universal is not an empty concept of the understanding that requires singular content to be given from the outside; nor is it something merely immediately related to the singular in a judgment. Rather, thought is *syllogism*: the universal *determines itself* into particularity and exists in singulars.<sup>60</sup> To grasp thought in this way is however to grasp it as self-realizing, i.e. as *will*.<sup>61</sup> (Will is therefore never unthinking desire: it is the comprehension that spirit realizes itself, determining itself in reality, and that reality must therefore reflect spirit back to itself). The will however requires a content that is appropriate to its universality,<sup>62</sup> i.e. to itself. The only content appropriate to the thinking will however is precisely the thinking will: i.e. the free will that wills the free will—i.e. free spirit.<sup>63</sup>

Thought, will, and free spirit, are thus progressively more adequate forms of the concept of spirit (the subject turning inward on itself and determining itself), though without involving the actual determination (i.e. the objectification) of spirit in the world. One might wonder why Hegel is intent on denying that subjective spirit is *merely* subjective, i.e. why (since the human being is spirit) it does not involve the determination of spirit in the world. After all, does not the human individual have an empirical reality which expresses its inner character? Does not Hegel describe in the section on subjective spirit how the human individual makes real (e.g. in habits) its spiritual essence?

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<sup>60</sup> *EPW* §467.

<sup>61</sup> *EPW* §471.

<sup>62</sup> *EPW* §469.

<sup>63</sup> *EPW* §481.

Here I would like to offer an interpretation of the relation between subjective spirit and absolute spirit: in particular, between free spirit (will willing will) and philosophy (thought thinking thought). I will claim that as free spirit, the individual human being is an *image of God*, reproducing in itself (to the extent that it is possible) the self-realizing character of spirit. However, the difference lies in the finitude of free spirit, and this finitude is the reason why free spirit is *only* a will willing itself, and not thought thinking itself. I recognize that intelligence is presupposed by free spirit, but the intelligence of subjective spirit is, I will argue, not the same as self-thinking thought.

It is true, then, that free spirit somehow resembles philosophy: i.e. that the individual human being does ‘determine itself’ in some sense. But *as individual*, it does not determine itself in the absolute way that spirit proper (i.e. the absolute) does. When the individual, finite spirit turns inward (i.e. when spirit in a human individual turns inward on itself) it discovers precisely that, though it is spirit, in its finitude and externality it is not identical with spirit as such. As free spirit the human individual knows that spirit wills itself and determines itself in a world. But the mere individual is not able to determine itself adequately on its own, as we see in the section on objective spirit. If it makes itself real as a thing (which is hence its *property*), its concretization of its personality still requires the recognition of *another*.<sup>64</sup> If it makes itself real as (universally valid) moral action, the act still bears the mark of arbitrariness, having been initiated by *this* individual, with *these* needs, at *this* time and *this* place, to achieve *these* specific results. This kind of realization necessarily involves all sorts of contingencies

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<sup>64</sup> *EPW* §491; *GPR* §§40, 71.

that are not only unintended by the individual, but that undermine and misrepresent the intention.<sup>65</sup> The realization that is appropriate to spirit, in which spirit is able to recognize its own self, can thus only be a supra-individual realization (i.e. it must transcend its immediate existence as a human individual): the object here is *Sittlichkeit*, the institutions that are the product of an entire culture, or the world history that is the product of all nations of the world. That is, the object here does not need to be brought into existence by a zealous moral subject, but rather comes to be in its own right, as the absolute's determination of its own self.

Thus when spirit proper determines itself, it determines itself as objective spirit (ultimately, the state): and this is the determination of *the absolute's own self* in the world (its positing of a world as its own creation), in which it subsequently knows itself and becomes absolute spirit. The human individual on the other hand is not the absolute itself. The human individual is merely the immediate existence of spirit, and hence (considering it in abstraction from the state), the individual "is spirit" always only as a judgment. The particular term that is lacking in this judgment is *the state*, the full flowering of objective spirit (i.e. of spirit itself in objectivity). It is *the state* that is the determinate reality of the absolute itself (i.e. God himself). Thus the (*singular*) individual 'is' spirit (i.e. the idea knowing itself in externality) insofar as it plays a part in the (*universal*) absolute's presentation of itself to itself in the *objective particular*, world history. In contrast, the habits of an individual cannot mediate between the singular existence of spirit (the individual human being) and the absolute. Habits only mediate between a singular feeling

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<sup>65</sup> *EPW* §§508, 511; *GPR* §§115, 117-118, 123.

and the whole character of the individual human being<sup>66</sup>—and even this represents a very primitive stage of spiritual development. The human individual is (at best, as free spirit) only the implicit (*an sich*) idea, the (abstract) concept of absolute spirit.<sup>67</sup> In other words, the individual human being is an *image of God*. The most a human being can hope to attain (considering him solely as an individual, apart from his social role in the state, or his cognitive participation in absolute spirit) is to exist as free spirit: a fully developed thinking will which determines itself in the proper syllogistic manner. That is, the most an individual as such can hope to attain is to be a *very accurate* image of God—but still *only an image*.

To say that the individual human being is an image of God is to express metaphorically the speculative truth that subjective spirit bears within it the concept and its determinations (as Hegel says in §385). All of the determinations of the concept of spirit are present within free spirit—and moreover they are *for* free spirit, i.e. subjective spirit at this stage *knows* these determinations (even if this knowledge is only the person's immediate certainty that he is free). What this means is that the individual human being can imitate God by concretizing the very structure of spirit (viz. the self turning inward and realizing itself) in its own, limited sphere: viz., syllogistic, self-realizing thought, and in the will which wills itself as free spirit.

Moreover, the individual human being, like God, can come to know itself as spirit. Of course, this is true only if “know” is used analogically: the human individual (as *subjective* spirit) does not “know” itself as spirit in the same way that God does. God

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<sup>66</sup> *EPW* §409.

<sup>67</sup> *EPW* §482.



knows itself by recognizing itself in the state, its objectification, in the medium of the intuition, feeling, or thought of the individual human being (i.e. in absolute spirit). The individual human being (considering it only as subjective spirit, and not in its role in absolute spirit) knows itself as spirit in a more abstract and finite way as free spirit. Free spirit has for one of its moments syllogistic *thought*: thus it knows that it is self-determining, and therefore that the world ought to agree with it. In other words, free spirit is *will*. But merely being a will does not make it free spirit: as the finite, immediate existence of spirit, this will is susceptible to all sorts of singular contents which, in their bare singularity are contingent and inadequate to the will as such. The proper object for the will is a particular arrangement of these singular impulses that allows for a happy life. In willing this happy life as its own objectification, the will wills itself, and is free.

To draw a distinction between the free will willing itself and thought (as absolute spirit) thinking itself is not to deny that the will in free spirit is intellectual: as we have seen, the will is not blind, brutal appetite, but rather subjective spirit's understanding of itself as self-determining, and subjective spirit's consequent insistence that reality reflect its own self back to it. As free spirit, the will has an object that is appropriate to its own universality: it wills its own immanent particularity, viz. happiness. Yet insofar as spirit is merely *subjective*, then it does not have its own self before it objectified. It is only *absolute* spirit that has its own self as its object (in world history), and is able to think its object (which is itself thought existing as an object), and thus to be thought thinking thought. Free spirit has as its object only an *end*, something which *ought to be* (viz. its own happiness).

Yet absolute spirit is not a *will* to bring into existence something that presently only ought to be: it is the complete satisfaction in what actually is. Thus God is not embedded in time, as free spirit is: rather, God has time (as world history) as its object. While free spirit *wills* itself in its object (happiness) which it intends to bring about, God does not *will* God's self in God's object (world history): rather, God *thinks* God's self. God contemplatively grasps world history as the objectification of God's own self (i.e. as thought, self-determining intelligence, in objective form). The essence of God as thought *thinking* thought is possible because God is outside of history, and views it not as an ongoing process but as a completed reality. Individual human beings like ourselves on the other hand are not outside of history: the objectification of spirit is for us an ongoing process in which we are engaged consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly. Thus as subjective spirit, the most we are capable of is free spirit, the will willing will (the will striving to objectify itself); we are not capable (insofar as we are subjective spirit) of thinking thought. Of course, we individual human beings (and above all we philosophers) are somehow involved also in absolute spirit: it is in our feelings, representations and especially our thoughts, that God knows God's self. It is because we have this role in absolute spirit that we can legitimately call into question the mores of our time and place (i.e. the particular nation-state we happen to live in)—but this capacity should not, I would argue, be identified with thought as it is understood in the psychology section of subjective spirit, or the will and free spirit which proceed from this thought. The status of the individual philosopher as a concretion or moment of absolute spirit is a

terribly difficult problem. Fortunately for us, it is also a problem that we need not discuss further, insofar as it is only tangential to our topic.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> We will limit ourselves to remarking that Hegel's approach resembles Kant's to a certain extent. For Kant, each person has made a choice (which takes place outside of time) to constitute his disposition (*Hang*) as either one of morality, oriented toward the moral law, or one of self-love, oriented toward gratification of one's own inclinations. It is impossible for us to tell which we have chosen: a person's disposition, even his own, is inscrutable to him; and one's deeds are ambiguous insofar as an apparently good deed could be the result of a genuinely moral disposition, or an evil disposition coupled with prudent calculation (*Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*, pp.44-45). Only God can see the disposition of a person, and he does this by seeing the whole history of the person's life in a single instant (*Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft* p.48). Likewise, for Hegel, the individual subjective spirit remains embedded in history, and can only *will* the objectification of spirit; it is the prerogative of God alone to see the whole of history as a realized end, and to *think* this objective thought. Yet it would seem that for Hegel the individual can, through philosophy or religion, transcend what would otherwise seem to be the inexorable human condition, i.e. the individual can *think* (or feel) thought, thus becoming a concretion of absolute spirit.

## CHAPTER FOUR: THE NATURAL SOUL

### Introduction

In this chapter we turn to the anthropology itself. The anthropology is divided into three sections (on the natural soul, the feeling soul, and the actual soul). These sections will be the objects of chapters four and five. Thus in this chapter we will confine ourselves to the first section of the anthropology, the natural soul.

To understand any part of the *Encyclopedia* it is necessary to understand and refer to all of the other parts. It is for this reason that we took such great care in chapter two to trace Hegel's argument in the paragraphs devoted to outlining the "concept of spirit," and in providing a general overview of the course of the philosophy of objective spirit and the philosophy of absolute spirit in chapter three. Yet the necessity to understand the connections to other parts of the *Encyclopedia* seems to be especially pronounced regarding the twelve paragraphs on the natural soul.

In the section on the natural soul we will be concerned with various phenomena in which spirit knows itself in and as nature, such that here spirit fails to distinguish itself from nature at all. These phenomena of the 'natural soul' include: racial distinction, which for Hegel is rooted in the division of the world into continents and the geographical features of these continents (both of which are covered in the philosophy of

nature<sup>1</sup>); nationality, which for Hegel is likewise rooted in geography (covered in the philosophy of nature), though nationality also receives its proper treatment in the paragraphs on “ethical life” in the philosophy of objective spirit (especially the introductory paragraphs<sup>2</sup>); the relation between the sexes, which as Hegel notes,<sup>3</sup> only receives its proper spiritual significance in the parts of objective spirit devoted to the family,<sup>4</sup> but which refers also to the sex relation in the philosophy of nature<sup>5</sup>; “character” as a natural quality of the individual soul,<sup>6</sup> and as playing a role in sensation,<sup>7</sup> which, as Hegel notes,<sup>8</sup> presupposes free spirit<sup>9</sup>; the human senses, which are related both to the senses of the animal organism,<sup>10</sup> and to the natural phenomena which are sensed, all of

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<sup>1</sup> *EPW* §§339-340.

<sup>2</sup> *EPW* §§513-516, *GPR* §§142-157.

<sup>3</sup> *EPW* §397.

<sup>4</sup> *EPW* §§518-522, *GPR* §§158-181.

<sup>5</sup> *EPW* §369.

<sup>6</sup> *EPW* §395&Z p74.

<sup>7</sup> *EPW* §399Z pp.111-112, and §402Z p.120.

<sup>8</sup> *EPW* §395Z p.74.

<sup>9</sup> *EPW* §§481-482.

<sup>10</sup> *EPW* §§357-358.

which are previously deduced in the philosophy of nature (e.g. light,<sup>11</sup> sound,<sup>12</sup> heat,<sup>13</sup> shape,<sup>14</sup> weight,<sup>15</sup> particularized airiness and particularized water<sup>16</sup>).<sup>176</sup>

It is therefore clear that the phenomena under discussion in the “natural soul” section have extensive connections to other parts of the *Encyclopedia*. However, if a study of Hegel is ever to be completed and not merely a perpetually unfinished project, it must be limited, and therefore in some sense one-sided and inadequately explained. Indeed, Hegel was fond of quoting Goethe’s dictum that he who would be something great must limit himself<sup>17</sup>—a sentiment which we could take as our motto for this chapter. We can rest assured then that as we explain the natural soul in a mere chapter (restraining ourselves from getting lost in innumerable other sections for the purposes of this explanation), we have Hegel’s blessing. We will therefore severely limit ourselves in referring to other parts of Hegel’s work, though without abstaining completely.

### The natural soul

The natural soul is the soul in its immediate existence in nature.<sup>18</sup> Much of the content of the section on the natural soul is a retrieval of material from the philosophy of

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<sup>11</sup> *EPW* §§317-320.

<sup>12</sup> *EPW* §§300-302.

<sup>13</sup> *EPW* §§303-307.

<sup>14</sup> *EPW* §§310-315.

<sup>15</sup> *EPW* §293.

<sup>16</sup> These are smelled and tasted respectively (*EPW* §321).

<sup>17</sup> *EPW* §80Z p.170, §401Z p.116, §448Z p.251, & *GPR* §13Z.

<sup>18</sup> *EPW* §390.

nature, reinterpreted here to show its spiritual significance.<sup>19</sup> Hegel's

“reinterpretation” is meant to show how the idea must be understood insofar as it is not merely external to itself (i.e. not merely nature) but rather knows itself<sup>20</sup> and hence is spirit also—though to say that the idea is nature and “also” spirit gives the false impression that spirit and nature are two internally unrelated attributes of the idea, whereas in truth spirit contains nature within it as its presupposition, of which it is the truth.<sup>21</sup> The individual human being is the immediate existence of spirit: that is, it is in the human being that nature (viz. a living, organic being) comes to know itself<sup>22</sup> as the idea—thus rendering itself spirit rather than mere nature. As merely immediately existing, spirit at this stage knows itself as the idea and knows all of nature as the idea (i.e. as itself): thus it identifies immediately with nature, and does not know itself at first as anything distinct from nature.

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<sup>19</sup> Hans-Christian Lucas remarks that if the term “life” was not already taken, referring to a stage in the philosophy of nature, it would be appropriate to refer to the natural soul as the sphere of “human *life*” („Die ‚souveräne Undankbarkeit‘ des Geistes gegenüber der Natur“ p.278).

<sup>20</sup> When we say that both spirit and nature are the idea but nature is the idea in its externality to itself while spirit is the idea which knows itself in its externality to itself, we mean that both nature and spirit express the idea in its totality. Nature expresses the idea in the form of corporeal extension (and hence the externality of parts to parts). However, what in nature appear as objects external to each other are in spirit reduced to mere moments of the idea's self-knowledge, in which the idea returns to itself. This will be illustrated and made clear in different forms throughout the various phenomena that for Hegel belong to the natural soul.

<sup>21</sup> *EPW* §381.

<sup>22</sup> The way an individual human being (i.e. finite spirit) ‘knows itself’ as the idea (and hence is spirit) is not the same as the way spirit proper (infinite or absolute spirit) knows itself, though nor are they unrelated. For an investigation into the relation between these two forms of self-knowledge, see chapter three, especially the last section. In the opening section of this chapter we will speak of spirit ‘knowing itself’ without going into the precise relationship between spirit proper (absolute spirit) and finite spirit's self-knowledge: this is partly because a fuller account of this relation was given in chapter three, and partly because the nuances in this relationship which are most relevant for us here in the natural soul section will be presented below, as we go through the sections in detail.

The individual human being of course takes up space, and excludes other extended objects from the space it occupies (i.e. the human being has *mechanical* determinations); and the human being is materially composed of certain elements which exist in polar relations with other elements (i.e. the human being has *chemical* determinations); and the human being is a combination of interrelated vital processes which take in and dispose of inorganic nature, as well as an individual of a species and a genus in pursuit of the prerogatives of which he expends his energy and his life (i.e. the human being has *organic* determinations). In all of these ways the human being is a part of nature, and resembles other mechanical, chemical, and organic objects. But humanity—even the immediately existing, individual human being—is ‘also’ spirit: this means that the human being is capable of determinations of which nothing merely natural is capable (e.g. thought, patriotism, philosophy); but also (and more importantly for us here), this means that “natural” determinations (such as space, time, sound, light, shape, heat, geography) are, for the human being, phenomena of spirit (i.e. in the soul’s knowledge of these natural phenomena the idea knows itself). Most properly of course, the idea as spirit knows itself in its own objectification of itself in world history (i.e. *objective spirit* in its most developed form).<sup>23</sup> Our object in this dissertation is not quite as grand and exalted, but perhaps not less interesting, and still worthy of study: it is the way spirit knows itself *in* and *as nature*.

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<sup>23</sup> *EPW* §§548-552.



### Natural qualities

#### *Natural qualities*

“Natural Qualities” is the first of three parts of the section on the natural soul. Its name prompts us to recall *Encyclopedia* §§86-98 in the first part of the science of logic’s doctrine of being: “Quality.” We must not dwell too much on the logic, but we can note that the section on quality begins with the most immediate determination, “pure being,”<sup>24</sup> and terminates with being-for-itself,<sup>25</sup> i.e. that which has being in its own right, insofar as it is explicitly mediated through its other, having reduced that other to a mere moment of its being for itself. Likewise, the whole of the section on the natural soul (and not only the subsection entitled “natural qualities”) begins with spirit in its immediacy as *existing* nature, and terminates in sensation (and its transition into the “feeling soul”), wherein the soul knows its sensory content as its own self, and thus returns to itself from this other, and is for-itself.

Within the section on natural qualities itself, we have only the presentation of the terms of the syllogism as they are determined as the immediate existence of spirit in nature. The universal is given in §392 as the “universal planetary life”; the particular is given in §393 as the “particular natural spirits [or, spirits of nature, *Naturgeister*],” viz. races, and in §394 as the further particularized “*local spirits*” or “nations [*Völker*]”; the singular is given in §395 as the “individual subject.” Let us go through these moments one by one.

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<sup>24</sup> *EPW* §86.

<sup>25</sup> *EPW* §§96-98.

*The universal soul*

In examining the universal, we should not restrict ourselves to §392, but look also to §391 (though this technically precedes the “natural qualities” section), where Hegel says that the “*universal soul* [allgemeine Seele],” as “*world soul* [Weltseele]” should not be understood as subject; rather, it is a universal *substance* (*allgemeine Substanz*), which has actual truth only in the singular souls which are its accidents. This “substance,” Hegel continues in §392, is the universal planetary life. If we look back to the “geological nature” section of the philosophy of nature, we will see that the earth is a totality which is implicitly alive<sup>26</sup>: that is, everything necessary for life is contained in the earth (which connotes not just the land and the water, but also the atmosphere and meteorological processes), but only as separate forces. *For us* the earth is a totality therefore, but not for itself: this is the same as saying that the soul of the world (*Weltseele*) is not a subject.<sup>27</sup> The world has no center<sup>28</sup> where it is for itself and knows its separate forces only as moments of its one global life. Instead, as we learn in the anthropology, the world soul is

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<sup>26</sup> *EPW* §338.

<sup>27</sup> Jan van der Meulen likens the universal soul to Carl Jung’s concept of the “collective unconscious” (“Hegels Lehre von Leib, Seele, und Geist,” p.254), which is a sort of intersubjective, perhaps *transcendental* structure determining all psychic life (Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* pp.42-53). Meulen also credits Hegel with anticipating in his section on the feeling soul (which we will examine in chapter five) with some of the insights later to be expressed by “depth psychology [*Tiefenpsychologie*]” (“Hegels Lehre von Leib, Seele, und Geist” pp.260-261), the exploration of the relationship between the conscious and unconscious mind in both Freudian psychoanalysis and Jungian psychology.

<sup>28</sup> Obviously the earth has a spatial point that is roughly equidistant from the various points on its surface, but we do not mean “center” here in this spatial sense. Rather, we mean “center” as the spiritual interiority in virtue of which a subject is a subject and is for-itself.

only a *substance*, having its actual truth only in *individual souls* (i.e. human beings, *for whom alone* the earth is a totality).<sup>29</sup>

To be sure, a scientist can know the earth as a totality insofar as he has studied the various forces of nature and knows their relationships, but this is not what Hegel is talking about when he says that it is in the individual soul that the universal (world) soul has its actual truth. As a mere soul, a human being is unable to undertake scientific research, because the soul is such a primitive stage of spirit that it does not even know natural objects in distinction from itself. Instead, the universal soul has its actual truth in individual souls insofar as the latter are unconsciously affected by geological phenomena such as the changing of the seasons, times of day, etc.<sup>30</sup>

For example, many studies have been done to show that exposure to sunlight has consistently beneficial effects on people's moods. Thus in the winter, when there is less sunlight, some people, who were happy in the summer, become depressed; indeed, rates of depression are consistently higher in places with less sunshine (which are comparable in other relevant respects). Accordingly, in Japan, a country whose overpopulation would require many to live crowded into buildings with no windows, or whose windows would be blocked by other tall buildings immediately beside them, there is a "sunshine law" which mandates that all children under a certain age live in conditions which allow

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<sup>29</sup> Michael Wolff shows in his book (*Das Körper-Seele Problem*) that Hegel conceived of the soul as the unity of thought and being in much the same way that Spinoza considered the substance to be such a unity (see pp.83-94, also pp125-133). And of course, part of being a mere substance for Hegel, is not being a subject, and this too holds of his account of the soul.

<sup>30</sup> *EPW* §392. See also *VP* pp.35-36.

exposure to a minimum amount of sunlight—so important is this exposure to the sun thought to be for general human development.

Now, the relationship between unconscious moods of human individuals and the earth (with its various geographical, climactic, and meteorological determinations) is such that the latter has its ‘actual truth’ only in the former because what for the earth is only the succession of seasons (i.e. merely a train of states which are never brought back to unity and thus never reduced to mere moments of a totality which is for itself) is (or can be) for the individual human soul only a moment of its return to itself (as either joyous or melancholy for example). The individual human being does not need to understand the causal effect that the change of seasons has on his mood (indeed, if he did understand this, he would have all but freed himself from this influence), he needs only to feel himself in these geographical phenomena, thus reducing them—even if he does not know this as we do—to a moment of himself (while for the earth these phenomena remain outside of each other).

However, it is important to note that Hegel is not giving a materialist account, in which nature determines human moods, as one mechanical object determines the movement or rest of another. The “natural soul” section invites this kind of misunderstanding throughout, insofar as one might assume the soul to be ‘natural’ in precisely this mechanical sense. However, I will try throughout this chapter to remove this misunderstanding every time it may arise. Though the anthropology concerns immediately existing, corporeal spirit, its object is still *spirit*, whose concept, given in *Encyclopedia* §§381-384 (which we examined in chapter two), stipulates that nature is

only its *presupposition*, that which it *sets before* itself as the material in which it will realize itself, such that it is *spirit* which is the truth of *nature* (and not vice versa).

In reading Hegel's discussion of the "universal soul" we should not therefore think of the earth exerting itself as an efficient cause on the human being (taken as something *merely* corporeal) such that a 'mood' is produced in the latter as an *image* of the terrestrial cause. Rather, the point of this paragraph is that as soul, spirit *cancels* the independence of nature (these geographical phenomena) and reduces them to a moment of its being-for-itself: the soul is "natural" only because it does not *know* that it is different from those natural phenomena (which are rather more like images of *spirit*). However, we know that the soul is different from these geographical phenomena, and if we fail to acknowledge this difference, then we misunderstand the soul. The soul is "universal" in the sense that, though it is always actually only this or that *individual* soul, it knows itself only in nature generally, and not as an individual (though again, we know and must acknowledge its actuality only in individuals).

It is also important to make the point that while the human being *can* be unconsciously affected in this way by geographical phenomena, he need not be. Indeed, it is more proper to animals and plants to be determined in this way.<sup>31</sup> Human beings on the other hand are capable of much more sophisticated development (and it belongs to their essence *in fact* to attain a much higher development), such that this unconscious attunement to nature is to be understood (like other anthropological phenomena we will examine in chapter five) as a *disease* to which the human being is susceptible, but to which, insofar as it is spirit, it will not succumb.

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<sup>31</sup> *EPW* §392A. See also *VPG* p.38.

*The soul's particularity*

It being established that on the level of the soul the individual human being can sink into a state of attunement with geographical and climactic phenomena, the question becomes what the structure of the world is, i.e. how precisely (or, how *in particular*) these phenomena are expressed in nature. In §393 Hegel asserts that “the universal planetary life [...] particularizes itself [*besondert sich*] in the concrete differences of the earth, and breaks apart into *particular natural spirits* [*besonderen Naturgeister*], which on the whole express the nature [*Natur*] of the geographical continents [*geographischen Weltteile*] and make up *racial distinction* [*Rassenverschiedenheit*].”

These ‘parts of the world’ (*Weltteile*) are the continents Hegel deduced in §339. There Hegel distinguishes the “new world” (North and South America) from the “old world,” which is itself divided into its three continents (Africa, Asia, and Europe), each with their physical, organic and anthropological character (*physikalischen, organischen und anthropologischen Charakter*). In the *Zusatz* to §393 Hegel explains what he considers to be the relevant geographical features of these continents: Africa is surrounded by mountains (which Hegel assumed to mean that the population was kept from the coasts); Asia presents a contrast of inlands and great rivers (without the two terms reaching a unity); and Europe contains the diversity that Africa excludes and the unity Asia fails to achieve.<sup>32</sup> The ‘anthropological character’ of the ‘races’ belonging to these continents ‘expresses’ the geography of each of these continents.

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<sup>32</sup> *EPW* §393Z p.58. In his *VPG* Hegel also discusses racial distinction but he only mentions that it has its roots in geography (p.39) without going into the details of the geography of the various continents.

These are for us today incendiary remarks. That they come from such a sober-minded thinker should give us pause, and prompt us to ask ourselves whether we are really understanding Hegel correctly by attributing to him the meaning which lies on the surface of §393 and its *Zusatz* (viz. that there is a racial hierarchy into which the human species is naturally divided, in accordance with the immutable and undeniable division of the continents and their various characters). It is unfortunate that most commentators who broach this part of Hegel either delight in digging up racist remarks attributed to Hegel in his lectures with a glee that is unbecoming for a scholar, or hurriedly and with obvious embarrassment pass it over, dismissing it as a sign that Hegel too was a child of his time.<sup>33</sup>

First, let us note that Hegel did not believe that some races or one race should have rights, while the rest should not.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, Hegel unequivocally condemns slavery,<sup>35</sup> and he held that Christianity was the most true religion partly because in Christianity it is posited not simply that *one* is free, or that *some* are free, but that *all*

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<sup>33</sup> For examples of the first approach, see Robert Bernasconi, "Religious Philosophy: Hegel's Occasional Perplexity in the face of the Distinction between Philosophy and Religion," "With What Must the History of Philosophy Begin? Hegel's Role in the Debate on the Place of India Within the History of Philosophy," "With What Must the Philosophy of World History Begin? On the Racial Basis of Hegel's Eurocentrism"; Lewis Gordon, *Her Majesty's Other Children*; Michael Hoffheimer "Hegel, Race, Genocide." "Race and Law in Hegel's Philosophy of Religion"; and Sûrya Parekh "Hegel's New World: History, Freedom and Race." For an example of the second see Hans-Christian Lucas, "'Die ,souveräne Undankbarkeit' des Geistes gegenüber der Natur" pp.280-281. One exception to these two inadequate approaches is offered by Andrew Buchwalter ("Is Hegel's Philosophy of History Eurocentric?"), who argues that Hegel is not Eurocentric or racist insofar as he opposes any contention that a single culture is intrinsically better than others (*Bildung* being constituted by self-examination and self-criticism).

<sup>34</sup> *EPW* §393Z p.57.

<sup>35</sup> *GPR* §57A.

human beings are in themselves free.<sup>36</sup> Additionally, we should note that the continents (in their *anthropological* character) do not divide up along what seem *prima facie* to be the lines established by nature, and the way most people think of the continents today: thus in the *Zusatz* to §393 Hegel identifies both the inhabitants of North Africa and those of “Western Asia” (i.e. the Middle East) as Europeans.<sup>37</sup> Similarly, in his lectures on the philosophy of history, he includes Muslims in the “Germanic world.”<sup>38</sup> This would seem to indicate that Arabs (and perhaps also Kurds and Turks) are European according to Hegel’s criteria. This, coupled with the fact that Hegel never in the anthropology or the philosophy of history sees fit to mention vast swathes of ‘Europe’ (such as Scandinavia, and only very rarely in the philosophy of history does he mention any of Eastern Europe), should show that by “race” Hegel did not mean what most people meant in the 20th century (viz. certain physiological characteristics such as skin color which are biologically inherited from one’s parents). Indeed, Hegel’s insistence that “descent [*Abstammung*] [...] gives no reason for granting or denying to people freedom, and dominating people like animals”<sup>39</sup> shows that for him race is not a determination belonging to a person in virtue of biology, i.e. of physical, anatomical characteristics. Were race to be a biological determination, then it would belong in the philosophy of

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<sup>36</sup> *VPGes* pp.31, 134.

<sup>37</sup> *VPG* pp.39-40. See also *EPW* §393Z p.58. In his article “Race and Law in Hegel’s Philosophy of Religion” Michael Hoffheimer is incorrect in arguing not only that Hegel should be considered a racist, but also in his misrepresentation of the place of North Africans (p.197).

<sup>38</sup> *VPGes* pp.428-434.

<sup>39</sup> *EPW* §393Z p.57.



nature's section on organics, not in the anthropology.<sup>40</sup> We would thus do well to forget the 20th century notion of "race" when reading Hegel. That Hegel should never mention Scandinavia at all in the anthropology or in the lectures on the philosophy of history is even more striking when we consider that during the time he was composing the former and delivering the latter there were many in Germany (e.g. Fichte)<sup>41</sup> who were singing the praises of the Nordic/Scandinavian 'race.' Hegel however had nothing but disdain for the ancestral culture of those who would in the 20th century be considered by the Nazis and their fellow-travelers as the most racially pure Europeans of all.<sup>42</sup>

These caveats having been granted, Hegel's theory of race can be summed up as follows. The world is geographically and climactically various; spirit is in its immediacy for-itself undifferentiated from this diverse natural world; thus spirit on the primitive level of the soul expresses the diversity that inevitably belongs to nature. This much, I think, can be accepted. In any case, to dispute it is to dispute not only a few superficial aspects of Hegel's system, but his very concepts of nature, spirit, and the soul—and the concept itself in its moments (universality, particularity, and singularity). However, we can (and should) oppose Hegel in many of the *judgments* he made in identifying a certain phenomenon (or his misapprehension of a phenomenon) with one of his categories.

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<sup>40</sup> We would dispute therefore the contention of Errol Harris that for Hegel the "racial" is equivalent to the "biological" ("Hegel's Theory of Feeling" p.81).

<sup>41</sup> See for example his *Reden an die deutsche Nation*.

<sup>42</sup> See for example his dismissal of Scandinavian (and indeed, German) mythology (*EPW* §80Z p.171, also in his *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik III* p.347).

I leave it to others more conversant on the topic to say whether his defense of Goethe's theory of color was well-advised,<sup>43</sup> but it is clear even to me that his evaluations of certain religions in his lectures on the philosophy of religion amount to a shocking travesty. Certainly, someone who cannot read Sanskrit cannot in any meaningful sense appraise Hinduism.<sup>44</sup> We can hold fast to the basic principles of Hegel's speculative philosophy while making allowances for the fact (for which Hegel was not at fault) that his information on many subjects was limited and one-sided, and that this poor information led him to make errors in judgment (which need not tarnish the fundamental legitimacy of his philosophy). In this way, I would dispute that all of sub-Saharan Africa can be impugned as Hegel has done (describing Africans as being like children, happily accepting their slavery because they do not even know that as human they are implicitly rational and free), and likewise the Americas and East Asia. Hegel himself revised his own work in subsequent editions of the *Encyclopedia* and therefore we should feel free to depart from the words of Hegel if we do so in pursuit of his spirit, and still call ourselves Hegelians.

In the name of posterity, we can therefore pardon Hegel these errors in judgment in light of the dearth of information he had on these places. Had he known that the Ethiopians have never once submitted to colonization in their entire history, or that the Zulus would in 1879, armed only with spears, obliterate an English army replete with

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<sup>43</sup> *EPW* §320&A.

<sup>44</sup> Moreover, the very pronounced and extensive parallels between Hinduism and Greek religion that were beginning to be discovered even in Hegel's time make perplexing why he would esteem the Greek "religion of beauty" so highly, but Hinduism so lowly. Hegel even notes in his lectures on the philosophy of history (*VPGes* pp.177-178, cf. pp.199-200) that Sanskrit is the basis for European languages (he was aware also of the Indo-European status of the Persians (*VPGes* p.215)). This makes his disdain for India (and Persia) more striking and less forgivable.

rifles and cannons, or that the stories of West Africans passively accepting their enslavement were lies concocted to silence abolitionists (and that in truth African slaves in America resisted their captors in a thousand ways, large and small), he would never have based his understanding of Africans on what we know to be obvious falsehoods.<sup>45</sup> We could mount similar protests against what he says about the Native Americans and East Asians.

However, the evidence I have just given perhaps only amounts to contingent historical facts: alone, they would not justify us in calling speculative principles into doubt. It is therefore more important than raising these historical facts that we dispute the contention that each continent must be determined by one and only one moment of the concept. The necessity of assigning the concept's moments in this way is never defended or justified. We can thus dispute that all of Africa is dominated by a single moment (interiority in abstraction from all difference) while still accepting that on the level of the soul, spirit is the expression of nature in its diverse variety. It could be that this expression is more complicated than the assignment of one moment to a single continent. Instead, all continents might exhibit all moments in different parts, and to varying degrees.

For an example of how this might appear, we need look no further than the United States. The United States exhibits immense geographical and climactic variety, and can be basically divided into a few regions: New England, the South, the Midwest, the Southwest, and the West Coast. Not only is the country divided along these lines in terms of its natural geography, but its subcultures are also largely divided along these lines. For

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<sup>45</sup> *VP* p.43. See also *EPW* §393Z pp.59-60.

an expression of these cultures, we can turn to American art. The two greatest American novelists of the 20th century were William Faulkner (from Mississippi) and Ernest Hemingway (from Illinois). Each of these two artists expresses, consciously or unconsciously, his own distinctive regional culture (Faulkner the South, Hemingway the Midwest).

Faulkner's prose is long and languid, flowery on the surface, but shot through with an intense, even *violent* pathos at its core: it resembles the irrepressible vegetation that covers every inch of a southern home with its long, winding and intertwining vines of honeysuckle, which flourishes in spite of or because of the oppressive heat and humidity. The people in the American South likewise combine the most gracious formality and politeness with the most sudden, turbulent, and emotional upheaval, in both politics and religion. Hemingway's prose in contrast is short, simple, bare, and yet imposing nonetheless, precisely because of its raw state: it resembles the Midwest, where the land is flat and covered in identical rows of corn, a land whose people are known for their authenticity and unadorned simplicity.<sup>46</sup> Our remarks on race can be applied to nationality as well, since the latter is but a further particularization of the universal soul according to the same principle.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> It is said that a friend of Hemingway's once made a wager with him, betting that Hemingway could not write a complete story in six words or less. Hemingway responded: "For sale: baby shoes. Never used." His friend duly paid up.

<sup>47</sup> *EPW* §394. See also *VPG* pp.45-48. It is also worth mentioning that the "bioregionalist" movement in environmental ethics has in recent years championed precisely this kind of identification with one's natural region as the proper way of living: "Even though our existence is dominated by sociopolitical demarcations, residents often describe their regions in natural terms. Midwesterners may feel a kinship to states in the short- or long-grass prairie agricultural heartland region, while Southwesterners may relate to the aridity of sagebrush, creosote bush, Joshua tree, or piñon-pine country. Appalachian-mountain dwellers may relate to similar mixed hardwood/softwood forest terrain, whether in Georgia, the Carolinas, Virginia,

*The individual soul*

In §395 Hegel considers the final moment of this syllogism: the individual soul. §395 is hardly an exhaustive account of the individual soul (rather, §§395-412 will be this account): §395 concerns the “individual soul” only as the union of the moments given in the universal and particular soul, viz. attunement to nature generally, and variety according to the variety in nature. The main text of §395 says very little: the fuller explanation (which interests us) belongs to the *Zusatz*. The *Vorlesungen* from 1827/28 transcribed by Erdmann and Walter and edited by Hespe and Tuschling have very little on the material from §395, but they lend credibility to Boumann’s *Zusatz* to §395 insofar as the Erdmann’s and Walter’s notes do not depart at all from it.<sup>48</sup> See chapter one for a statement on the use of lecture material.

As in §§392-394, in §395 *natural* determinations are here taken up immediately and endowed with spiritual significance. However, the natural determinations are not of geography or climate, but rather inborn talents and idiosyncrasies in an individual or family, the susceptibility to this or that temperament, and the tendency to develop character, which is likewise inborn. Of course, that these traits are “natural” can mean only that they are given rather than chosen and deliberately cultivated; it cannot mean that these can be reduced to merely mechanical, chemical, or organic determinations.

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Tennessee, or Pennsylvania. North Americans have always related to natural dimensions of their home territories”(Thayer, *LifePlace* p.19).

<sup>48</sup> Comprising less than two pages, Erdmann’s and Walter’s notes on the individuality of the soul concern the differences that Kant established between the temperaments (viz. that generally a person is not wholly dominated by any one temperament) (*IPG* p.48), and the fact that certain areas permit of talents (e.g. art and mathematics) and others (the essentially human activities, religion, reason, etc.) do not (*IPG* p.49).

Talent, temperament and character constitute a triad of phenomena which exhibit immediacy, mediation, and mediated immediacy respectively. A talent is an immediate determination of an individual insofar as it simply *is*: the individual simply finds himself with this or that talent, without mediation of education or training. The individual can have many talents, but each is external to the others, having nothing to do with it.<sup>49</sup>

A temperament on the other hand is a mediated determinacy for the individual, insofar as (if we accept the traditional set of temperaments as Hegel does, viz. sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric, melancholic) the temperaments are each intrinsically related to the others, i.e. each is mediated through the others: what it is to have a certain temperament is only to have the *contrary* disposition of another temperament (as e.g. the sanguine is the most extreme opposite of the melancholic).<sup>50</sup> That the temperaments are related to each other in this way and that the individual passes from one temperament to another (temperaments lacking the fixity of talents), indicate that the individual is able to establish some distance from any given temperament, insofar as he has been determined in the opposite way as well. Admittedly, the individual may also have various talents which differ from each other, but each talent is only occupied with a particular object outside of the individual, and not so much with the individual himself; and this particular object need bear no necessary relation to the object of another talent. In temperaments on the contrary (especially with the choleric and melancholic), the individual is occupied

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<sup>49</sup> *EPW* §395Z pp.71-72.

<sup>50</sup> *VP* §48-49. See also *EPW* §395Z pp.72-73.

with *himself*, and thus in passing to a different temperament he knows that he himself is determined in a different way.

Character unites the fixity of talent with the inward reflection of temperament<sup>51</sup> insofar as character is inwardly reflected (related to its opposite like temperament, and also cultivated) yet, if not impossible to change, at least resistant to change (i.e. ‘fixed’ like talent). Of course, as Hegel notes,<sup>52</sup> character presupposes what will only be deduced in free spirit (viz. one’s willed creation of a conception of happiness for oneself, in accordance with which some impulses can be consistently pursued and others consistently rejected, i.e. one’s creation of a pattern of desires and actions that are characteristic of oneself). Here then, what we are concerned with is only the “*natural* foundation [natürliche *Grundlage*]”<sup>53</sup> of character, i.e. that *natural* (unchosen, uncreated) determination in virtue of which some are more disposed to develop strong characters than others.

This “*natural* foundation” of character (with which alone we are concerned in §395) seems however to be only an inborn *talent* that one may have for developing a strong character. Yet this natural disposition to character development is still the unity of talent and temperament at least *implicitly*, insofar as it amounts to being ‘naturally’ determined to supersede mere natural determination by the development of character, in which one wrests oneself from being the mere plaything of whatever impulses nature

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<sup>51</sup> *EPW* §395Z p.74.

<sup>52</sup> *EPW* §395Z p.74.

<sup>53</sup> *EPW* §395Z p.74.

chances to send one's way, thereby subordinating what is naturally given to what is the product of the will.

The moments of the individual soul (talent, temperament, and character) can be summarily presented as: (1) the immediate determination of the soul in a certain way that is given by nature (viz. in a certain talent); (2) the determination of the soul in a way (viz. a certain temperament) that is mediated by other determinations (i.e. other temperaments) possible for the soul, into which the soul can pass; (3) the soul's determination of itself (in a certain character), i.e. the soul's immediate existence in a determinate way that is mediated by a process whereby the soul gives itself this immediate existence.

If we reflect on the moments of the individual soul in this way, we will see that these moments bear remarkable structural similarity to Hegel's characterization of the "races" (i.e. the particularity of the soul): (1) Africans are described as immersed in their own natural simplicity to the exclusion of difference (similar to the soul as "talent"); (2) Asians are described as unproductively oscillating between inert indifference and sudden activity directed outward (similar to the passing from one "temperament" to another); (3) Europeans are associated with the unity of the two above determinations (similar to "character").

The course of the section on natural qualities has shown that the determinations which belong to the soul generally, the soul in its universality (and are exhibited in the various characters that Hegel with little knowledge and less justification assigned to the different "races") are present also in the *individual* soul (insofar as it has talents, varies from temperament to temperament, and develops a character—or at least is more or less



naturally disposed to do so). The individual soul is thus a sort of microcosm of the universal soul: in some sense, all of nature is contained in the individual soul as its *inner* world.<sup>54</sup> Indeed, the determinations of the soul given in the “natural qualities” section (viz. immersion in one’s own simplicity to the exclusion of difference, unproductive oscillation between inert indifference and sudden outward-directed activity, and the unity of these moments) are *more* adequately realized in the individual soul (as its talents, temperaments, and character) than in the geographical dispersion of what are at this stage apparently unrelated races and nations. This greater adequacy of the individual soul (with its interiority, and greater potential for being-for-itself) is the reason why the *Encyclopedia* shifts in §395 to consider the *individual* human being, only returning to relations between individuals in the philosophy of objective spirit (first in *Encyclopedia* §490), where the intervening sections have rendered the bonds between individuals objective *spirit* rather than the mere universal soul. These intervening sections (i.e. the course of almost the entire philosophy of subjective spirit) concern the deduction of the ‘inner world’ within the individual, a world which contains all of nature in microcosm, and its relation to the world outside of the individual.<sup>55</sup>

That the individual human being as such contains *all* moments of the soul should, by the way, further warn us against accepting at face value what Hegel *seems* to say in §393 and its *Anmerkung* and *Zusatz* (viz. that the continent on which one is born and

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<sup>54</sup> As Hegel will put it later: “The soul is in itself the totality of nature, as individual soul it is a monad; it is itself the posited totality of its *particular* world in such a way that this world, with which the soul is filled, is included in it, and the soul relates to it only as to itself” (*EPW* §403A). See also *VPG* pp.33-34.

<sup>55</sup> The point will not be to reach a point at which the inner world *correctly corresponds* to the outer, natural world, but rather to show that the world outside of the individual, including the whole natural world, is itself at bottom the product of *spirit* (albeit not of the finite, singular, corporeal subjective spirit).

lives determines one's intellectual and moral capacities)—i.e. it should warn us against taking Hegel as a racist. We should understand Hegel's protestation in the *Zusatz* to §393 that descent is no ground for granting or denying freedom to human beings because "[h]umanity is implicitly rational"<sup>56</sup> in the context of the fact that the individual soul (be it African, Asian, or European) contains *all* of the soul's moments. From this it would follow that the individual soul inhabiting a certain continent should not be understood as being simply dominated by *one* moment only, to the exclusion of others: thus Hegel says that "genius, talent, moral virtues and sentiments, piety, can be found in all zones, constitutions, and political states"<sup>57</sup> Here we make the transition from the "natural qualities" section to the section on "natural changes."

### Natural changes

#### *From natural qualities to natural changes*

That the individual contains all of the moments of the universal is thus posited in the transition from natural qualities to natural changes: it is this positing that all of the moments of the soul are present in the *individual* soul which justifies the move to a new section. Indeed, Hegel even says that what the genus (*Gattung*) was for the animal, "rationality [Vernünftigkeit]" is for the human being,<sup>58</sup> though while the genus realizes itself only imperfectly in the singular animal, this imperfection is not necessary in the

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<sup>56</sup> *EPW* §393Z p.57.

<sup>57</sup> *VPGes* p.89.

<sup>58</sup> *EPW* §396Z p.76. See also where Hegel says that "that which is animalistic in the genus process [*Gattungsprozesses*] belongs to the consideration of life as such in the philosophy of nature" (*VPG* p.56), and "In the animal what it needs is good for it, existing in this felt way—instinct—, the human has no instinct, its instinct is reason [*Vernunft*]" (*VPG* p.72).

human being's relation to its "genus" (i.e. rationality—its genus insofar as it is *human*, not insofar as it is a mere animal), because the relation is one of *thought* (*Denken*).<sup>59</sup>

Thought (as we saw in chapter three) is self-determining,<sup>60</sup> i.e. it realizes *its own self* in its determinations. The animal genus on the other hand is not self-determining in this way, being rather only a *judgment*<sup>61</sup> and not a syllogism. The animal feels itself to be the genus (and thus essentially one with another animal which is of the same genus, though materially other<sup>62</sup>), but it has no awareness of the inner determinacy of the genus in virtue of which it particularizes itself. Insofar as the animal is unaware of the mediation between the genus and its own individuality, it simply takes itself to be the genus *simpliciter*, never grasping its own particularity, nor coming to see the genus as anything implicitly particular. For the animal, the genus (which it feels itself to be) is pure, abstract universality: for the animal, the moment of particularity thus only ever appears suddenly and incomprehensibly, as death interrupting its life.

For the human being on the other hand, its "genus" (i.e. rationality), is self-determining, giving itself existence in the particular individual; and, since *for the human* its 'genus' is not abstract, even this universal's *immanent particularity* finds a place in the individual, who therefore possesses all of the moments of the concept within himself. Thus while the animal is always only a limited, singular being in an *external world*,

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<sup>59</sup> EPW §396Z p.76.

<sup>60</sup> EPW §467.

<sup>61</sup> EPW §367.

<sup>62</sup> EPW §370.

though it takes itself to be the power over everything, it is the human being, as spirit, who truly has this power, insofar as he has his own *inner world*, in which all of the determinations of nature are reproduced, and in relation to which he is a *concrete*, self-determining universal. That the human individual contains all of the moments within himself (and all of the world in a microcosm) is shown clearly in the first shape of the “natural changes” section, the ages of life (*Lebensalter*).

*General remarks on the ages of life*

The ages of life are the various stages through which a human being passes, from birth (or perhaps conception) to death. In contrast to the animal, to which death is unknown and which is overtaken by it suddenly (such that death is the *opposite* of animal life), for the human being, death is present in some way throughout life. We should thus not consider “life” to be a universal term, with “plant life,” “animal life,” and “human life” as its differentiae. Human “life” is different *in kind* from animal “life.”<sup>63</sup>

The “life” of a *mere* animal is the active, organic *form* which is stimulated by the inorganic matter surrounding it and impelled thereby to act, consuming this matter, reducing it to this “form”(i.e. these activities themselves, e.g. respiration, digestion, etc.). On the surface, these activities (i.e. the animal’s “form”) are *opposed* to the inorganic material which they constantly seize, pulverize, and assimilate as fuel for the continuation of these activities; yet in truth the animal’s form is an abstraction from this matter on which it depends for its continued operation. The animal does not understand this

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<sup>63</sup> For this and other reasons I disagree with Michael Wolff, for whom the anthropology concerns not phenomena which are distinctly human, but rather phenomena which are shared between humans and animals. See below for my criticism of Wolff’s position in detail.

dependence, but only sets about *destroying* inorganic nature (the condition of its existence)—thereby rendering it in the end *self-destructive* (without of course being cognizant of this fact).

Of course, this all applies to the human being as well<sup>64</sup> *but only insofar as it is an animal*, not insofar as it is human. Human life is not the physical seizure and destruction of nature, but the *thinking* appropriation of nature (its reduction to a representation belonging to the human being).<sup>65</sup> To be sure, humans also need to eat and breathe—but not insofar as they are human: these are not distinctly human activities and hence do not (in their merely organic function) appear in the anthropology.

The ages of life are not therefore biologically determined stages, but rather stages in the individual's cognitive relation to the world. We should not be misled by the section's title, "natural changes," into supposing that the ages of life have to do merely with physiological changes in the body. Rather, these physiological changes are involved, but they are not the focus of the paragraph. As *merely* physiological changes, they belong to the section on the animal organism in the philosophy of nature. These changes are included here only to show that in the human being, there is a *corresponding* ("entsprechen[d]") series of "spiritual appearances"<sup>66</sup>: i.e. in tandem and in agreement with the physiological changes the body undergoes (e.g. growth, puberty, maturation), there are spiritual phenomena (forms of cognitive relation to the world, or ways in which

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<sup>64</sup> *VP*G p.51.

<sup>65</sup> Of course, the life of spirit is ultimately the thought of its own self, its objectification in objective spirit. Sensation of *nature* is only a preliminary stage, but still a part of the life of spirit.

<sup>66</sup> *EPW* §396Z p.76.

the idea knows itself) which more properly belong to and define the human being and human life.<sup>67</sup>

One might object to the interpretation given here in the following way: if the “natural changes” section concerns mainly not physiological, organic changes, but instead such a succession of “spiritual appearances,” then why is the section called *natural* changes, and not *spiritual* changes? My response would be first to point out that if we are according authority to titles, we should not forget all of this belongs to the philosophy of spirit, not the philosophy of nature. Secondly, I would reiterate that physiological changes are indeed involved, and that a presupposition of the whole of the anthropology is that the soul is spirit that does not distinguish itself from nature—but *we* cannot *understand* the soul unless we notice that spirit is distinct from nature, and that the “spiritual appearances” that are the object of §396 are distinct from the physiological changes with which they are “correlated.” Thirdly, (as a corollary to my second point), I would point out that even the succession of “spiritual appearances” is not willed by the natural soul, and is thus experienced as if it were something given *naturally*, as if from the outside.

Fourthly, the ‘ages of life’ belongs to the section called (at least in the second and third editions of 1827 and 1830) the *anthropology*, i.e. the study of human beings. Wolff argues that Hegel’s use of the term “anthropology” as a subtitle here should not be taken to indicate that human beings in their humanness are the object of investigation.<sup>68</sup> In

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<sup>67</sup> Hegel does not therefore follow materialists like La Mettrie in explaining the emergence of reason in the soul by the growth and maturation of the body (*L’Homme Machine*. p.296).

<sup>68</sup> *Das Körper-Seele Problem* p.31. As we noted in chapter three, Wolff argues that social life is the *condition sine qua non* for a human life, and because the anthropology concerns only individual human

order to defend this position, Wolff is put in the awkward position of having to maintain that Hegel simply accepted the term “anthropology” and the field of study it denoted for 18th century philosophers like Kant, while arguing (here, correctly) that Hegel’s “anthropology” cannot be compared to Kant’s “pragmatic anthropology” because the latter is an empirical discipline concerned with the kinds of contingent characteristics that Hegel explicitly rules out of his own anthropology in §377.<sup>69</sup> One wonders why Hegel would have used the term at all, unless he meant his anthropology to be the *logos* of the *anthropos*.

*The ages of life in their specificity*

Let us briefly introduce these stages before examining them in detail. There are three major divisions: childhood, manhood, and old age. Childhood however can be further subdivided into three (or perhaps four) substages: infancy (what Hegel simply calls the life of the *Kind*, using the general term for “child”); boyhood (the life of the *Knabe*); and youth (the life of the *Jungling*); Hegel mentions the unborn child (*ungeborene Kind*) as a possible stage of childhood preceding infancy, but leaves it unclear whether it is ultimately to be accepted as a stage of life.<sup>70</sup>

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beings, it should not be taken as a doctrine of *human* nature, but rather a study of the physical conditions of human life, conditions which are shared with animals (*Das Körper-Seele Problem* pp.29-30). However, as we mentioned last chapter, Wolff overlooks both: (1) the fact that the phenomenology and the psychology *also* concern only individual human beings; (2) the anthropology in fact does not exclusively concern individuals, but actually contains the original deduction of the social life of humans (*EPW* §394). (See p.101n for a remark on “deduction in Hegel”).

<sup>69</sup> *Das Körper-Seele Problem* p.31

<sup>70</sup> *EPW* §396Z p.78.

The life of the unborn child is life in a “vegetative state [*vegetativen Zustand*],”<sup>71</sup> the “life of a plant [*Leben der Pflanze*]”<sup>72</sup> insofar as the fetus has no notion of particular objects, or indeed of anything objective at all, anything standing against it. The fetus is in uninterrupted commerce with its environment, aware neither of subject nor of object. This is a “vegetative state” because according to Hegel’s account in the philosophy of nature, plants draw their nourishment from nature in an unbroken flow, never relating to inorganic nature in its individuality.<sup>73</sup>

Birth is the *physiological* “natural change” which is “correlated” with the transition to a new stage: infancy.<sup>74</sup> The life of the infant consists in growth: not in the production of new shapes, but in the quantitative increase in size and strength.<sup>75</sup> The former sort of growth would be typical of plants (and unborn children), which produce new ‘parts’ (as e.g. the plant produces new leaves and buds, though each of these parts is simply the plant itself immediately existing): these ‘parts’ are not members which are reduced to moments for a *subject* which has *being-for-itself*.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> *EPW* §396Z p.78. See also *VPG* p.52.

<sup>72</sup> *EPW* §396Z p.78.

<sup>73</sup> *EPW* §344. Aristotle too holds that the embryo lives only a vegetative life (*Generation of Animals* 736a27-736b13).

<sup>74</sup> The interpretation I am giving, that the ages of life are truly spiritual phenomena and not biological stages is confirmed in Hegel’s lectures, where he says of the birth of an infant “the physiological changes are not so significant” (*VPG* p.52), insofar as the vegetative state continues to a certain extent beyond this physiological change into infancy (p.52). This shows that what is relevant in the ages of life is the way in which the human being knows itself and the world, and not so much the traversing of biological stages.

<sup>75</sup> *EPW* §396Z p.79.

<sup>76</sup> *EPW* §343.



The infant in contrast does have a center for which its members are only moments (i.e. the infant is in some sense a *subject*), such that its growth is not the proliferation of new immediacies (each of which would be itself a potential infant), but rather an enlarging of what are only moments of the one infant. In its respiration and consumption the infant has dealings with singular objects, but insofar as it is only an infant, it has no appreciation of the fact that objects are separate and independent of it. Its cries are the expression of its immediate certainty that the objects before it *ought* to be reduced to moments for it, though also an implicit acknowledgement that they are not.<sup>77</sup>

When the infant begins to sense these objects, then he begins to pass over into the next stage, boyhood.<sup>78</sup> By sensing and perceiving objects, the infant comes to see that objects are out of its reach—and thus begins to see that it is *itself* an object, occupying only a determinate space. The boy knows the resistance of the world to his subjectivity, and can thus be thought of as a humbled infant. But it is by accepting that he is himself a limited being alongside others that the boy is able to exert the kind of real control over objects that the infant merely demanded. By walking, for instance, the boy—while remaining of a determinate size—still manages to conquer space.<sup>79</sup> It is worth noting that while the infant extended itself through space only by unconscious growth (and felt itself entitled to *all* of space), the boy occupies determinate positions in space *willfully*—as a directive from his own determinate self of which he, unlike the infant, is aware. Indeed,

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<sup>77</sup> *VPG* p.52. See also *EPW* §396Z p.79. Compare this to Rousseau's account of how a child learns space and extension by learning that objects differ from himself (*Émile* tome premier pp.75-76).

<sup>78</sup> *VPG* pp.52-53. See also *EPW* §396Z pp.79-80.

<sup>79</sup> *VPG* p.59. See also *EPW* §396Z p.80.

by speech, the boy is acquainted with universals, and begins in other ways to look beyond what is immediately present, e.g. by enjoying stories.<sup>80</sup> The boy likewise begins to see that he is not what he ought to be (viz. a grown man)<sup>81</sup>—though the infant only had a dim awareness that *other* things were not as *they* ought to be (viz. at his disposal), but did not succeed even at beginning to differentiate himself from his immediacy. Yet though the boy does make this distinction, he still only knows what he ought to be in the form of an immediacy (viz. another existing individual, e.g. his father).<sup>82</sup>

With the physical change of puberty, there is a corresponding spiritual change, as the boy enters the final stage of childhood, viz. youth.<sup>83</sup> Of the youth, Hegel says “the life of the genus begins to stir within him and to seek satisfaction.”<sup>84</sup> To be sure, as a *physiological* change, puberty involves the emergence of the sex drive which is in some respects a *merely animal* phenomenon in which the individual is driven to reproduce the genus; yet this is not what Hegel means here by the stirring of the “genus [*Gattung*]” in the individual. Recall, “[w]hat in the living being [*Lebendigen*] as such [i.e. the *animal*,

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<sup>80</sup> *VPG* p.53. See also *EPW* §396Z p.80.

<sup>81</sup> *VPG* p.53. See also *EPW* §396Z pp.80-81.

<sup>82</sup> *VPG* p.53. See also *EPW* §396Z pp.80-81. It is worth noting that here Hegel departs from Rousseau, with whom his entire corpus in some sense but *EPW* §396 in particular seems to be in dialogue. The departure consists in how adults should see to the upbringing of children. As is well known, Rousseau advises against lecturing children with abstractions they cannot understand. Instead, the educator should descend to the level of children, share their faults and their ignorance, experience what they experience and prompt children to learn the only appropriate way, from their own experience (*Émile* tome premier pp.416-417). Yet Hegel in his lectures has nothing but opprobrium for “the pedagogues of play” (*VPG* p.53, *EPW* §396Z p.81), i.e. those who “lower themselves” to the level of children for purposes of instruction. Hegel can only be referring here to Rousseau’s disciples in the field of pedagogy.

<sup>83</sup> *VPG* p.54. See also *EPW* §396Z p.83.

<sup>84</sup> *EPW* §396Z p.83.

whether human or beast] is the genus [*Gattung*], is *rationality* [*Vernünftigkeit*] in the spiritual being [*Geistigen*],”<sup>85</sup> i.e. in the human being as such.

Here we have still more reason to oppose Wolff in his judgment that all of the phenomena in the anthropology are of what is shared between humans and animals. Wolff makes this judgment regarding the ages of life in particular on the basis of what he sees as the distinction Hegel makes in this paragraph between vegetable or “external” growth (in which the plant is simply duplicated again and again in what are essentially new plants) to animal or “internal” growth (in which the one life differentiates itself into different members whose independence is cancelled in the activity and self-maintenance of the single life).<sup>86</sup> As we have seen however, the difference between vegetable growth and ‘animal’ growth is limited to the difference between the life of the fetus and the life of the infant. The ages of life continue beyond infancy however, and the distinctively human aspect emerges unambiguously in adolescence, where the life of the genus (which is *reason*, not a biological classification) awakens in the individual.

The stirring of the life of the genus in the youth is here not the drive to copulate, because the ‘genus’ is not the human species (as a biological classification). Rather, the genus is *reason*. As we saw in chapter three, reason (as the conclusion of the phenomenology of spirit) is the identity of subjectivity and objectivity<sup>87</sup>: this means that the subject at that stage can be assured that its subjective representations are of the same

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<sup>85</sup> *EPW* §396Z p.76. Again, this point (stated differently) belongs not only in Boumann’s *Zusätze*, but also in Erdmann’s transcription of the 1827/28 lectures (*VPG* p.56).

<sup>86</sup> *Das Körper-Seele Problem* pp.33-34.

<sup>87</sup> *EPW* §438.

order and connection as the materially existing objects in nature. Here, in the ages of life, the stirring of “reason” in the adolescent means that once the boy has become acquainted with universality in language (even calling himself “I”), he will not long be satisfied with any immediately existing man for his ideal, his image of what he ought to be. This universality is the ‘genus’ within the youth which now “begins to seek satisfaction,” by rejecting everything immediately existing in favor of the universality in his heart (as “an ideal of love and friendship, or a universal state [*Weltzustand*] of the world”<sup>88</sup>), a (subjective) universality with which he knows that the (objective) world *ought* to agree, and must be *made* to agree. However, just as reason (as the conclusion of the phenomenology of spirit) is an identity of subject and object that only *ought* to be actual<sup>89</sup> (since it is not until thought reveals itself as syllogistic and hence as *will* that the universality *actually* determines itself in particularity<sup>90</sup>) so the reason that stirs in the youth’s breast is essentially “in opposition to the present [*vorhandene*] world,”<sup>91</sup> and hence is an ideal that only *ought* to be.<sup>92</sup> The abstractness of his ideal is what renders the youth *only* a youth, and not a man.

Manhood for Hegel involves one abandoning the abstract ideals of youth, accepting the reality of the world which resisted those ideals, and setting oneself to work.

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<sup>88</sup> *EPW* §396Z p.83.

<sup>89</sup> *EPW* §441Z.

<sup>90</sup> *EPW* §§467-468

<sup>91</sup> *EPW* §386Z p.83. See also *VP* p.54.

<sup>92</sup> For Rousseau, the love that emerges in the breast of a youth is the love of a generalized chimera, in comparison with whom no real woman can measure up (*Émile*, tome deuxième p.134).

While the youth knew only flighty abstractions, the man has become familiar with the details of the world, and in his work actually achieves ends (albeit less exalted ends than the ones championed by the youth). As the boy is an infant who has been humbled by the reality of the world outside of him, so the man is a youth who has been so humbled.

Along with the revolutionary fervor of the youth, the man has lost the youth's carefree *joie de vivre*, and feels the hard life of work imposed on him by necessity.<sup>93</sup>

However, by occupying himself with the concrete reality of the world, the man in time transforms it to a certain extent, and transforms himself, such that by old age (the last stage) he is habituated to the world, which he henceforth no longer experiences as offering him any resistance. The old man can look back on his life and see not merely a series of particular, contingent activities; rather, he can see his activity as part of the realization of ends larger than himself, ends which are legitimate and which come to be in their own right. He is thus freed from the grief over the destruction of his ideals (the grief characteristic of manhood). As the world is no longer felt as something distinct, the vitality (*Lebendigkeit*) of the man is extinguished.<sup>94</sup> —This is death, which is in a certain sense a physical event, but as the termination of a *human* life, has spiritual significance. This significance is that the opposition between his “genus” (i.e. reason) and his own singular existence has been overcome: the particular term mediating between these two extremes are the ages of life themselves. As a human being with these successive determinations (the ages of life), the individual has realized the genus, i.e. given reason

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<sup>93</sup> *VP*G p.55. See also *EPW* §396Z p.84.

<sup>94</sup> *VP*G pp.55-56. See also *EPW* §386Z p.85.

real existence in the world (insofar as by old age the opposition between subjectivity and objectivity is overcome).

The death of the human being is thus not simply the cessation of the operations of vital organs: this manner of death belongs to the end of the philosophy of nature. There the animal (and indeed, the human as well, but *only insofar* as it is an animal) dies when the “life has become processless *habit*,”<sup>95</sup> i.e. insofar as the vital processes no longer relate to inorganic, singular matter as an object opposed to it, which must be assimilated (or ‘processed’). Now, though in the ages of life each age has a *physical* event and a correlated change involving ‘spiritual significance,’ we should not assume that the physical event takes place *first* and the spiritual alteration is somehow a response or an *epiphenomenon* in relation to the corporeal change. Indeed, with old age, the physical event by necessity comes *last*: the physical death of a person is his destruction, even though most properly the person is not merely physical. *Before* the physical death however, it is possible (in ‘old age’) to reach a kind of *spiritual* death, which is not the annihilation, but rather the perfection of the human being: this death is the extinguishing of the opposition between reason (the ‘genus’) and particularity through a lifetime of labor and the consequent reconciliation to the course of the world and satisfaction with one’s place in it. In other words, the old man is able to see that the results of his work are the existence of what is essential—i.e. that they are *actuality*<sup>96</sup> This retrospective

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<sup>95</sup> EPW §375.

<sup>96</sup> EPW §142.

cognition of actuality is of course wisdom, philosophy.<sup>97</sup> Hegel's famous "owl of Minerva" dictum (viz. that philosophy emerges only when a way of life has grown *old*<sup>98</sup>) should be understood in this context.

We may remark at this point as well that Hegel uses the ages of life as a metaphor for the epochs of world history in his lectures on that topic. There he identifies the East (viz. China and India) with the world's "age of infancy [*Kindesalter*],"<sup>99</sup> central Asia (viz. the peoples of the Persian empire, which includes not only Persians as such, but also Assyrians, Babylonians, Hebrews, and Egyptians) with the "age of boyhood [*Knabenalter*],"<sup>100</sup> the Greeks with the "age of youth or adolescence [*Junglingsalter*],"<sup>101</sup> Rome with the "age of manhood [*Mannesalters*],"<sup>102</sup> and the "Germanic [*Germanische*, not *Deutsche*] realm" with "old age [*Greisenalter*]." <sup>103</sup> That determinations which Hegel elsewhere assigns to distinct peoples are all already present (in some form) in the ages of life of the *individual* soul should, by the way, lead us to further question the appearance of racism and chauvinism in *Encyclopedia* §§393-394 and in other places.

Additionally, we might say that one of the phenomena that make the difference between human beings and animals most clear is *old age*. The animal spends its life as an

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<sup>97</sup> *EPW* §573.

<sup>98</sup> *GPR* p.28.

<sup>99</sup> *VPGes* p.135. In keeping with my translation of *Kind* in *EPW* §396 as "infant," "*Kindesalter*" would be rendered "age of infancy."

<sup>100</sup> *VPGes* p.137.

<sup>101</sup> *VPGes* p.137.

<sup>102</sup> *VPGes* p.138.

<sup>103</sup> *VPGes* p.140.

individual in a state of unresolved (because unmediated) tension with its genus. This tension is resolved only in the death of the individual animal. The genus returns to itself through this death of the individual animal, but not in the feeling or activity of the individual animal while it is alive. All of the vital processes of the animal *stand in opposition to* dead, inorganic matter, which they try to assimilate. Thus animal *life* itself stands opposed to *death*. The life of spirit on the other hand does not have death as its opposite, because it has no opposite at all: spirit is the suffering of “infinite *pain*,”<sup>104</sup> the complete emptying of subjectivity and its identification with or “manifestation” in its “opposite” (see chapter two). Therefore insofar as the human being is an animal (i.e. a living organism), ‘old age’ is only the decaying of the body, the phenomenal ‘manifestation’ of the individual animal’s inadequacy to its genus: this is only a *negative* manifestation insofar as the genus itself is only ever actualized in imperfect individual animals, whose inadequacy becomes apparent not with the revelation of anything positive, but only with the death and disappearance of this individual creature (a process which is senselessly repeated *ad infinitum*). In spirit however, the genus (reason) attains a *positive* manifestation as the individual human being knows himself and his life to be the reality of this genus. Thus for the human being, old age is a time in which the *human* genus (rationality) attains singular existence, but the inadequacy of this singular *insofar as it is an animal* to its genus has not yet appeared (i.e. death has not yet destroyed the old man’s body).

In the light of the difference between the life of spirit and the life of organic nature, the supposedly profound observation that each of us will inevitably one day die

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<sup>104</sup> *EPW* §381.



(i.e. suffer the death proper to the *animal*) becomes rather trite. This observation, however true, is of little philosophical importance because insofar as the human being is *human*, it is *not* necessarily inadequate to its ‘genus’ (i.e. reason), and for this reason human life is *not* (as that ‘profound’ observation would imply) the meaningless cycle of birth, procreation, and death that animal life is.

### *The sexual relation*

The ages of life show, in a sense, the entire philosophy of spirit, as reflected in the temporal span of the life of an individual soul. Yet this phenomenon is succeeded by the “sexual relation,” in which the individual soul feels itself as limited, and having to seek itself in *another* individual soul.<sup>105</sup> This transition (from the whole of the philosophy of spirit ideally contained in the life of one individual soul to the individual soul’s *real difference* from another individual soul, the latter of which is the former’s *own self*) could be interpreted as an acknowledgement that the individual human being is somehow *irreducibly* limited, insofar as it is still an immediately existing corporeal being (with all the limitations this implies). However, I would argue against this interpretation: firstly, because the individual’s corporeal limitation was already raised in the boyhood stage of the ages of life, and will receive its proper treatment in the section on habit); secondly, as we will see below, both moments under examination in separate individuals in §397 are united again in one individual in §398 as alternating states of waking and sleeping.

The sexual relation (*Geschlechtsverhältnis*) is not a ‘natural change’ in the sense of one and the same thing passing from one state to another, so much as it is a “natural

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<sup>105</sup> *EPW* §397. See also *VP* p.56.

difference [*Naturunterschied*].”<sup>106</sup> This “difference” here does not amount to the setting beside each other of two unrelated determinations. Rather, these differentiae are *particularizations* of the universal: i.e. it is by these particular determinations that the universal comes to actual corporeal existence. Another “sex relation [*Geschlechtsverhältnis*]”<sup>107</sup> of course is found earlier in the *Encyclopedia*: viz. in the organics section of the philosophy of nature. There too, the relation is a particularization of the universal—though the universal in §369 is the (biological) *genus*, and not *reason*, as it is in §397. The terms of the sex relation in both cases are of course the sexes (male and female), but in §369 this is a *merely* natural difference, having to do only with the *physical* union of two animals in copulation (and the feelings drawing the participants thereto), while in §397 it is a difference immanent in *spirit*, having to do with the spiritual and ethical (*sittliche*) union of the two human beings in a family (and, again, the feelings drawing the participants thereto).

To be sure, the family is a moment of objective spirit, and thus presupposes much that we cannot cover here (though see chapter three for a brief synopsis). Here in the anthropology, the full significance of the spiritual union of the sexes in family life cannot be presented, but we can see that the ‘genus’ here (viz. reason, or we might simply say *spirit*) has as its immanent differentiae the ‘male’ and ‘female’ (these being taken not as physiological determinations of the human species, but as anthropological determinations

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<sup>106</sup> *EPW* §397. The same term is used in the lectures (*VPG* p.56).

<sup>107</sup> *EPW* §369.

of spirit). Let us now turn to the examination of these two determinations in their specificity.

The first determination is “subjectivity [*Subjektivität*] that remains one with itself in a sensation of ethical life, love, etc., not taking political, scientific, and artistic ends to the extreme of universality.”<sup>108</sup> The second is “activity [*Tätigkeit*] which has within itself the tension [produced by] the opposition between the universal, objective interests on the one hand, and the present state of his own existence and that of the external world on the other, and which first actually brings about a unity of these two.”<sup>109</sup> We may thus consider these two moments under the terms “subjectivity” and “activity,” provided that we acknowledge that Hegel also uses “subjectivity” in ways that are very different from its use here.<sup>110</sup>

These determinations are assigned to different ‘genders.’ We must keep in mind *first* that ‘gender’ here is not merely something natural (constituted by having different reproductive organs, and other physiological differences), but principally something spiritual. Hegel notes in §397 that “[t]he sexual relation acquires its spiritual and ethical

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<sup>108</sup> *EPW* §397. In his lectures Hegel does not call it “subjectivity,” but he describes it in the same way: “one sex remains identical with itself, not proceeding to the opposition of universality and individuality” (*VPG* p.56).

<sup>109</sup> *EPW* §397. A literal translation would have made this phrase unpardonably awkward, so what I have given is a paraphrase. Yet I would still esteem my paraphrase higher than that of Wallace and Miller, who render “*sich in sich [...] spannt*” as “where the individual is a vehicle of.” It is true that the individual is in his activity a vehicle for the realization of universal ends, but the Wallace-Miller translation does not convey that the tension (*Spannung*) between the universal ends and the given conditions is present *within* (*in sich*) the individual. I have also made sure that my translation reflects the presence in §397 of a form of the term *Wirklichkeit* (viz. “*verwirklicht*”), a technical term for Hegel traditionally translated as “actuality.” Petry’s translation is much better than that of Wallace and Miller. Mine is no more accurate than Petry’s, but I think it is a bit less awkward. In his lectures Hegel describes the “male” determination similarly, and even calls it “activity [*Tätigkeit*] which first produces unity [of universality and individuality]” (*VPG* p.56).

<sup>110</sup> See my explanation of the term “*Subjektivität*” for Hegel in chapter two.

significance and determination in the *family*,”<sup>111</sup> and if we look to the section in the *Grundlinien* on the family, we will see that there Hegel says “[t]he *natural* determinacy of the two genders [i.e. the physiological differences] receives *intellectual* and *ethical* significance through its rationality [*Vernünftigkeit*].”<sup>112</sup> It is clear from this that the sexual difference in *Encyclopedia* §397 is not a particularization of the *human species*, whose differentiae remain merely natural, but rather a particularization of *reason* (as Hegel said earlier that what was the genus for the animal was for the human “rationality [*Vernünftigkeit*]”<sup>113</sup>), and thus the ‘genders’ here are spiritual determinations.

*Second*, we must see that for Hegel, “activity” belongs to the male, while “subjectivity” belongs to the female. Hegel does not make this explicit in §397, nor in *Encyclopedia* §§518-519 where he returns to the sexual relation in the context of the family. Yet in the *Grundlinien* he does assign these moments to certain genders: to the male belongs “the spiritual that divides itself into personal independence which has being *for itself* and the knowing and willing of *free universality*, the self-consciousness of conceptual thought, and the willing of the objective end.”<sup>114</sup> To the female belongs “the spiritual maintaining unity with itself as knowing and willing the substantial in the form of concrete *singularity* and *sensation*.”<sup>115</sup> Obviously, these descriptions agree with the

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<sup>111</sup> See also *VPG* p.59

<sup>112</sup> *GPR* §165.

<sup>113</sup> *EPW* §396Z p.76.

<sup>114</sup> *GPR* §166. Likewise, in his lectures he explicitly assigns these moments to genders (*VPG* p.56).

<sup>115</sup> *GPR* §166.

determinations given in *Encyclopedia* §397 that Hegel calls “activity” and “subjectivity” respectively.

What Hegel says in *Encyclopedia* §§397, 518-519 and *Grundlinien* §§165-166 today invites the charge of sexism, just as *Encyclopedia* §393 invites the charge of racism. I would like to leave open the possibility that this charge can be refuted though I will refrain from offering an argument for its refutation here as it would take us too far afield, requiring a deep and intense study of Hegel’s philosophy of objective spirit, which is not our purpose here. Let it be enough to remark here that both “activity” and “subjectivity” reappear in the following section (§398) as waking and sleeping respectively (this will be shown below). For this reason, I would like to suggest that there is good cause to doubt that Hegel held (or at least cause to doubt that that he should have held) that the male sex is devoid of what he calls in §397 “subjectivity” and the female sex is devoid of what he calls there “activity.” Let us proceed then to §398.

### *Sleeping and waking*

The transition from §397 on the ‘sexual relation’ to §398 on sleeping and waking can be summarized briefly as follows: what in §397 were understood as two opposed moments (viz. “subjectivity” and “activity”) are in §398 posited *together* as mutually determinative, appearing in the same individual soul as “*alternating states*”<sup>116</sup> (viz. sleeping and waking). Indeed, Hegel even uses the same terms to describe these states: “[b]eing awake [*Wachsein*] generally includes all self-conscious and rational *activity* [*selbstbewußte und vernünftige Tätigkeit*] of spirit’s distinctions in which it has being-for-

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<sup>116</sup> *EPW* §399.

itself”<sup>117</sup>; while “[s]leep is the invigoration of this activity [*Tätigkeit*] not merely as negative rest from it, but rather as return from the world of *determinacies* [Bestimmtheiten], from the diversion and the focus on singularities, into the universal essence of subjectivity [*allgemeine Wesen der Subjektivität*] which is the substance of those determinacies and the absolute power over them.”<sup>118</sup>

Waking is thus described as “activity.” Moreover, waking is said to involve the kind of tension or inner division that we know “activity” to involve: “[t]he distinction of individuality as *being-for-itself* from itself as mere *being* [...] is the *awakening* of the soul.”<sup>119</sup> Furthermore, Hegel continues, “[a]wakening is not only distinct from sleep *for us*, or externally; it is itself the *judgment* or *original division* [Urteil] of the individual soul, whose being-for-itself is for it the relation of this, its determination to its [mere] being, the distinction of itself from its still undifferentiated universality.”<sup>120</sup> The “being [*Sein*]” or “mere *being* [*nur seiender*]” from which the awoken soul distinguishes itself is precisely “the given conditions of its own existence and that of the external world” from which the soul in its “activity” distinguished itself in §397 (it being understood that in the transition to §398 activity and subjectivity are posited together in the same individual

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<sup>117</sup> *EPW* §398.

<sup>118</sup> *EPW* §398. Errol Harris also recognizes the presence throughout the natural changes section of these two alternating principles, though he associates them with sleeping and waking, rather than activity and subjectivity as I have: “Every stage of psychical life takes on these two alternating forms [viz. sleeping and waking] at all ages, thus they are an aspect of all other psychophysical conditions listed. Further, all the psychophysical differences characteristic of the life-periods of the individual are duplicated in the two sexual forms. So that all of these natural alternations are interrelated, all aspects of the same organic life” (“Hegel’s Theory of Feeling” p.82). Harris however does not explain precisely *how* (in what forms) these principles are present throughout the natural changes section, except to associate infancy and old age with sleeping and the intervening ages with waking (p.82).

<sup>119</sup> *EPW* §398.

<sup>120</sup> *EPW* §398. See p.71n for a remark on the use of the locution “for us.”

soul). Likewise, sleep is described as a withdrawal into “subjectivity.” And just as in §397 the moment of subjectivity was described as in unity with itself, so in §398 sleep is described as “closed up within itself [*in sich verschlossenen*].”

As forms of “activity” and “subjectivity,” waking and sleeping are different forms of *judgment*. A judgment is of course an ontological (not merely *formally* logical) category in which a universal ‘predicate’ is immediately identified with an individual—with no account being given of how a given individual ‘is’ a universal.<sup>121</sup> Thus in a judgment the universal and singular are at once united and divided: those different moments (the judgment’s unity and its division) are represented by sleeping and waking respectively. Sleep is *subjectivity* in the same sense as in the sexual relation, viz. as “knowing and willing the substantial [i.e. the universal] in the form of concrete singularity”<sup>122</sup> with no mediation between the two being posited, a return from the world of determinacy into the universal essence of subjectivity.<sup>123</sup> Thus in sleep the soul cuts itself off from the sensed world of determinate objects, and sinks into immediate unity with its representations.

Waking on the other hand involves being wrested from this state of unreflective unity and confronted by objects that merely *are*, and are opposed to one’s own soul in its universality. This opposition is unmediated however, and that is why Hegel says that in the judgment (*Urteil*) that is waking, the soul distinguishes itself from its “still

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<sup>121</sup> *EPW* §§167-169.

<sup>122</sup> *GPR* §166.

<sup>123</sup> *EPW* §398.

undifferentiated universality”<sup>124</sup>: that the universality is “still undifferentiated” means that it is *un-particularized*, i.e. its particular determination has not been posited as immanent within it. Thus as “activity” presents the *contrast* between universality and singularity, along with the mere *demand* that they be made equal, so subjectivity presents the *identification* of universal and singular, with no awareness of their incongruity. Taken together, “activity” and “subjectivity” present both aspects of judgment: the disparity between the universal and singular, and their jarring, unexplained union.

Yet though the alternating states of sleeping and waking combine the moments of activity and subjectivity in one individual soul, it still remains the case that the soul shifts from absorption in universality to fixedness in singularities, without mediating the opposition between these two moments. Thus “activity” and “subjectivity” in §397, as well as “waking” and “sleeping” in §398 are all judgments. But in the passage from §397 to §398 it is posited that since activity and subjectivity are each an abstraction from the other, each must be posited in the individual soul as such, though at this stage they still only exist alongside one another as alternating states.<sup>125</sup> They are brought into a more concrete union in sensation, where the relation between the universality of the soul and the concrete singularities of existence are posited as mediated by *the senses*.

#### *Recapitulation of natural qualities and natural changes*

As the final section on the natural soul, the section on sensation is the culmination of the preceding sections (viz. those on “natural qualities” and “natural changes”). At the

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<sup>124</sup> *EPW* §398.

<sup>125</sup> Similarly, for Aristotle sleep cannot be explained as the chance disruption of one or another of the sense organs. Instead, it must be understood as the shutting down of sense perception generally, and thus must be understood as belonging to the perceptive soul as such (*On Sleep* 455b8-10).



beginning of the part on the natural soul, Hegel gives the terms of the syllogism (viz. universality, particularity, and singularity) as they are concretized at this stage: the rest of the part on the natural soul concerns how these terms relate to each other, and precisely what phenomena manifest these relationships. Let us review the course of the natural soul up to this point before continuing with sensation.

In “natural qualities” the terms of the syllogism are concretized in the following way. The *universal* soul is the “universal planetary life”<sup>126</sup>: this refers the earth’s climactic and seasonal variation—not insofar as they are merely natural phenomena (to that extent, they belong rather to the philosophy of nature), but rather insofar as they are expressed in different ways in the moods of *individual* souls (within which alone the universal soul has reality). The *particular* term of the natural soul is likewise not the earth’s geographical variation (viz. the division of continents, and the specific topographical features of each) insofar as such variation is *merely* natural; rather, it is the expression of these difference in racial and national distinctions.<sup>127</sup> The *singular* term is the individual soul, which is determined (we are meant to assume) by the characteristics of its race and nation, and also determines itself into its own talents, temperaments, and character (or the natural disposition thereto).<sup>128</sup>

Already in the “natural qualities” section, there is expressed one of the most important features of the whole philosophy of spirit, and perhaps the single most important feature of the philosophy of subjective spirit: viz. that as spirit realizes itself in

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<sup>126</sup> *EPW* §392.

<sup>127</sup> *EPW* §§393-394.

<sup>128</sup> *VP* pp.48-49. See also *EPW* §395&Z.

an *external* world which includes its immediate existence in individual human beings, each of these *individual* human beings in turn becomes at the same time a universal with respect to the contents of his own *inner* world.

This inner world is poorly represented by the phenomena given in §395 and its *Zusatz*. However, these phenomena (talent, temperament, and character) do show: (1) that the individual soul is determined within itself (e.g. it has various talents); (2) that the soul's determinations are determinations of *its own self*, and thus cannot exist indifferently beside one another, but must be related, passing into one another (as do the soul's temperaments); and finally (3) that despite being variously determined, the soul remains an *individual*, and thus that the soul must realize itself in determinations in which it is *fixed*, and which are explicitly determinations of the soul's own self (e.g. in character).<sup>129</sup>

As we proceed to the section on "natural changes," we further draw out the implications of there being an individual soul, which has determinations which are at once *its own*, and yet "natural" in some sense. The "natural changes" section will only achieve something resembling stability at its end, in sensation. Initially, in the ages of life, the individual soul has temporally successive determinations which display its essence serially, but *developmentally* (unlike the universal soul's changes of seasons and the individual soul in natural qualities which passes from one temperament to another with no development or inner purposiveness).

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<sup>129</sup> These features of the soul are still less adequately represented in the 'racial characters' that Hegel deduces. (See p.101n for a note on "deduction" in Hegel).

Each age is a determination belonging to the essence of the soul; yet the soul remains outside of itself (and hence merely natural) insofar as until old age the soul's true essence is present only as a *future* possibility. I have tried to show however that the natural soul is *not* "natural" in the sense that its ages are mere spiritual epiphenomena with respect to organic changes in the body: thus it is not that the physiological process of puberty that *makes* the youth seek to 'propagate' the universal proper to spirit (viz. *reason*). Rather, this physiological change is a less adequate expression of the idea; the idea is more adequately expressed by the life of the *spiritual* universal stirring within the youth.<sup>130</sup>

In the sexual relation, the essence of the soul is reduced to its two principal moments (viz. "activity" and "subjectivity"), existing simultaneously, but in *two different* individuals (thus the individual's externality to itself in the ages of life is here made explicit). In these individual souls there is: the *distinction* of the universal from the individual (as activity and its "tension" which is equally the striving to *overcome* this distinction); and the immediate unity of the two in sensation (*Empfindung*) (as "subjectivity").

In sleeping and waking these two moments are posited as transitory states in one and the same individual. This is indeed a re-temporalization of the universal-singular

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<sup>130</sup> In Michael Wolff's analysis of the 'body-soul problem' in Hegel's anthropology, he explains that "spirit relates to external nature [...] in a teleological way, such that it relates itself to the things and events of external nature [...] as an end relates to a means" (*Das Körper-Seele Problem* p.112). Wolff presents his entire book as an analysis of *EPW* §389, though he uses the *Science of Logic* for support on this point; yet this point is, I think, best explained by reference to *EPW* §381, where Hegel explains that spirit sets (*setzt*) nature before (*vor*) itself as its presupposition (*Voraussetzung*), as the material (the means) in which it will realize itself (the end). –See chapter two for my full discussion of §381. Thus it is not that the physiological process of puberty is the *cause* of the stirring in the youth of his universal ideal; rather, the latter is the cause of the former (as spirit is the *final cause* of nature).

relation, but it is not a step back to the ages of life—still less to the universal planetary life (with its changing seasons). First of all, waking is a state that contains within it the difference between universal and singular: the waking soul knows itself *in opposition* to its sleeping nature—this is not the case with the universal soul’s seasonal or daily changes. It could be that the ages of life do have this feature, depending on how they are interpreted (arguably, the old man knows himself in opposition to his middle-aged status, as the middle aged adult—i.e. the “man”—perhaps knows himself in opposition to youth). However, in the ages of life all ages before old age seem superfluous: if one could be born already with gray hair (as Hesiod says we will be one day<sup>131</sup>), there would be no reason to suffer through the previous ages. Yet in sleeping and waking it is posited that, though these are alternating states of one and the same individual soul, each is mediated through the other: thus activity produces rest, and rest activity.

Therefore throughout the section on natural changes, universal and singular are related to each other, now immediately identified, now starkly distinguished; and even the immediate relation of the two becomes related to their distinction. Yet never in this section does the *particular* term show itself in order to mediate between these extremes, and relate them to each other in a stable way. Only in sensation does this happen: i.e. only in sensation is it shown how precisely the universal (the soul) can ‘be’ an individual (determination).

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<sup>131</sup> *Works and Days* line 181. For Hesiod of course, this is something lamentable.

### Sensation

Hegel devotes more paragraphs to sensation than to any other moment of the natural soul. Likewise, in this dissertation sensation is the most important moment of the natural soul (chapter five will be largely devoted to spelling out the precise relation between sensation, feeling, and habit). Accordingly, the remainder of this chapter will be devoted to sensation. First, we will introduce the five senses and explain how Hegel understands each of them. Subsequently, we will isolate certain nuances of Hegel's treatment of sensation generally, discussing them in turn. The first of these will be the relation of each sense to those phenomena deduced in the philosophy of nature which are its object(s). We will examine briefly the object(s) of each sense in our initial presentation of the five senses, but subsequently we will have occasion to examine the object of sensation in greater depth and to draw conclusion about what precisely in nature is sensed. The second nuance we will examine is what I have called (following Aristotle)<sup>132</sup> the "mixing" of the soul with the body, which characterizes Hegel's understanding of sensation. This 'mixing' makes it that the soul possesses certain determinations in the same way that merely natural objects do (since the body with which the soul is mixed is in some sense natural), and the soul's possession of these determinations will render the soul insensible to them, thereby limiting what the soul can sense. We will pick up on the soul's insensibility to certain determinations again in chapter five, where we will contrast sensation to feeling in precisely this respect. Finally, we will examine the corporealization of the emotions, which for Hegel is a phenomenon

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<sup>132</sup> See *De Anima* 429a18.

of sensation insofar as it is this corporealization of a spiritual content (e.g. anger) which allows it to be *felt*.

*Sensation: the five senses*

Sensation (generally) is the form of mediation between the soul and its content that is provided by nature. Specifically of course, there are five different forms of mediation between the soul and its content—viz. the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. These five are grouped in three classes in accordance with the moments of the concept. The first class is that of “physical ideality”<sup>133</sup>: this includes sight and hearing, and is characterized by the fact that in it “difference appears as *variety*,”<sup>134</sup> i.e. the object’s unity is sensed in abstraction from its diversity from itself (i.e. its materiality, its externality to itself). The second class is that of “*real difference*”<sup>135</sup>: it includes smell and taste, senses in which an object’s difference from itself receives its due (insofar as the object is broken down in the very sensing of it). The third class is that of “*earthly* [irdischen] *totality*,”<sup>136</sup> or “*concrete* [konkreten] *totality*”<sup>137</sup>: it includes just the sense of touch, the only sense which senses its object as a totality (and not ideality abstracted from difference or difference with no unity).

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<sup>133</sup> *EPW* §401A.; or “simple ideality [*einfachen Idealität*]”(*VPG* p.76). We will explain what this means below.

<sup>134</sup> *EPW* §401A.

<sup>135</sup> *EPW* §401Z p.103. See also *VPG* p.76.

<sup>136</sup> *EPW* §401Z p.103. See also *VPG* p.76.

<sup>137</sup> *EPW* §401Z p.104.

It suffices to reflect a bit to see why Hegel understood the senses this way. Let us first examine the senses of physical or simple ideality: sight and hearing. These are called the senses of physical or simple “ideality” because in sight and hearing the differences an object has in relation to itself (its externality to itself, or the spatial separation of its parts from each other) are rendered *merely ideal* differences.<sup>138</sup> That is, in sight and hearing these differences are subordinated to an overarching unity (and are thus not real, i.e. unsublated differences).

To be sure, if I am too close to a massive object I do not see the whole thing: I see only a part, and it would seem that the unity of the object, its ideality, escapes me. However, this failure to see the whole has to do with the particular circumstances involved (my position relative to the object and the object’s massiveness), and not with sight as such. Additionally, the fact that when I see something I see only the side of it presented to me does not alter the character of sight as physical ideality. The ideality of the seen object does not consist in seeing in an instant the entire surface area of the object—and still less does it consist in seeing every material part, including those internal to the object. Rather, this ideality consists in the object’s presentation of itself to the sense of sight as a certain color through the medium of light.

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<sup>138</sup> See Michael Wolff’s meticulous analysis of what Hegel might mean by calling the soul “the universal [or general, *allgemeine*] immateriality of nature” (*Das Körper-Seele Problem* pp.39-45). He concludes that the soul’s “immateriality” must be taken to mean that the soul is the particular way that the world (of nature) exists in a non-material, non external way—in other words that the soul is the “ideality” of nature (p.45).

Light for Hegel is a sort of universal element,<sup>139</sup> shining on all bodies and illuminating them. As visible (i.e. in relation to light), an object presents itself as one, a single phenomenon. In Hegel's discussion of light in the *Philosophy of Nature* he says: "In shaped corporeity the first determination is its *self-identical* selfhood [mit sich identische *Selbstischkeit*], the abstract self-manifestation of it as indeterminate, simply individuality—*light*. But shape as such is not luminous; rather, this property is [...] a *relation to light*."<sup>140</sup>

Just as shape is not by itself luminous, but must be brought into relation to light, light by itself illuminates nothing: it requires the presence of matter. Bodies as such are outside of themselves: but in relation to light, the externality of a body's parts is rendered ideal, and it manifests itself in a single phenomenon, its color. Thus what is seen is indeed light: but it is not pure, unadulterated light. Rather, it is color: the effect of light's interaction with matter,<sup>141</sup> i.e. light's idealization of the asunderness of matter and matter's 'darkening' of light. Were light to relate to something immaterial, no visible phenomenon would be produced: such a thing would have no color, being instead completely transparent.<sup>142</sup> When light relates to something material, the self-externality of the body's parts to each other is sublated in the manifestation of the body's color through the medium of light.

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<sup>139</sup> Hegel calls light "universal physical identity" (*EPW* §277), "immaterial matter" (*VPG* p.77). See also his discussion of the Persian religion of light in the *VPGes* pp.215-216 and the *VPR* (1827) pp.504-506.

<sup>140</sup> *EPW* §317.

<sup>141</sup> *EPW* §320. See also *VPR* (1827) p.510.

<sup>142</sup> A crystal most closely approaches this transparency (*EPW* §317&A).



We need not concern ourselves with how in its relation to light the precise material structure of *this object*, results in precisely *this color*: Hegel does not explain this. It is enough to explain what is seen (color) as the expression of a body's "physical ideality" (the unity of its parts with each other). Of course, the visibility of an object (its manifestation in color) is not only the expression of its unity with itself: it is *also* the manifestation of its *difference* from other objects. Yet this differentiation is contingent: another body may be the same color as the first, and to that extent the two bodies can be indistinguishable.<sup>143</sup> As *visible*, an object is only unified with itself; visibility does not guarantee the manifestation of the objects difference from other objects (this occurs only in the *tangibility* of objects, as we will see below).

Just as sight presents to us an object's unity with itself as a single visible phenomenon, so in hearing we sense a body's unity with itself in a single sound: and just as in sight the *determinate* color of an object distinguishes it from other objects, so in hearing a *determinate* pitch and timbre of an object differentiate it from others. Likewise, just as in the object of sight (viz., color), a body's physical ideality emerges only through a body's relation to something outside of it (viz. light), so in the object of hearing (sound), a body's physical ideality emerges only in relation to another object which strikes it, producing the sound.

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<sup>143</sup> To be sure, we know that two objects can be distinct even though they have the same color: but we must remember that two such objects *are not* distinct for vision. If the color is the same, then for vision the objects are indistinguishable. Of course, we also see shape, and can, using only vision, distinguish objects which are distinct but chromatically identical based on their spatial determinations (their precise figures and positions in space). However, this does not constitute an objection to Hegel: the fact remains that *we see only colors, and always only in the medium of light*. We can distinguish shapes by sight only on the condition that there is a difference *in color*.

An explanation of sound requires an explanation of gravitation. As we have said, nature is the idea in its externality to itself,<sup>144</sup> i.e. extension, corporeity. All bodies are extended; and this extension means that the body is composed of different parts, each of which is external to the others. Any *single* body is thus at the same time *many* (smaller) bodies, since each of its parts is a body in its own right. The concept of corporeity (i.e. the concept of nature) thus implies a system of particular bodies governed by relations of gravitation.<sup>145</sup>

That is, each body is *one* body, but each is also determined by determinate, communicable measures (e.g. motion, weight) such that each body attracts and repels all other bodies: the space a body occupies (i.e. its mere extension) and its weight determine its ability, when in motion, to repel other bodies; but bodies are at the same time set in motion by forces of (gravitational) attraction (forces which belong to *other* bodies)—which is equally a function of weight (or more precisely, mass) and its distance from other objects.

Now, this would appear to give us a stable, balanced world of corporeal interaction and mutual influence. However, when we consider the fact that any single body whatsoever is *still* a multiplicity of smaller bodies, each of which must have the same determinations (attracting and repelling all other bodies)—i.e. when we consider that gravity is not a monopoly of immense planets, but that even the tiniest body has its

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<sup>144</sup> *EPW* §247.

<sup>145</sup> For the sake of simplicity and brevity, in what follows I am combining the account of gravitation given in §269 & its *Anmerkung* (as the culmination of the section on mechanics) and the deduction of specific gravity in §293 (in the second part of the physics section). (See p.101n for a note on “deduction” in Hegel).

own *specific* gravity—the concept of the body itself threatens to break down. For, a condition for a single body to be a body at all is that it maintain unity with itself; but this maintenance of the body’s corporeal integrity is at once the *violation* of the corporeal integrity of its parts, insofar as the latter must cease to repel each other.<sup>146</sup>

That is, a body—any body—must *cohere* with itself in order to repel other bodies and maintain its independence, but this coherence of the whole body with itself is for its parts (which, recall, are themselves bodies in their own right) *adherence* to *another* body, the *failure* to repel this foreign body. The criteria for corporeity thus seem to contradict each other, yet (and this is the important part), each of these criteria has been legitimately deduced from the concept of nature.

The result of this is *sound*: “a body’s inner oscillation within itself.”<sup>147</sup> In sound, it is posited that the body’s repulsion of all foreign bodies is an *abstract* independence, since every body is itself a union of foreign bodies, which violates their abstract independence. In being sonorous, the *parts* of a body lose their foreignness to each other (at least for a time) in their vibration, and the whole body itself is stimulated to this vibration of its parts by being struck by a body which is foreign to the whole. Sound is thus the expression of the ‘ideality’ of the differences among the parts of a body, the qualification of this difference in the expression of the overarching unity of the body.

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<sup>146</sup> Thus the contradiction that was apparent on the level of the mechanical universe as a whole (viz. that each body at once attracts and repels every other body) here finds its way into the core of the most miniscule body, and thus is posited of the corporeal *as* corporeal.

<sup>147</sup> *EPW* §299. In his lectures Hegel describes sound in the following way: “What is called hearing is the vibration of bodies in themselves. The body vibrates, i.e. each part [of the body] is displaced [*sich verrückt*] into the place of the others, and is immediately once again pushed out by the others which assert themselves”(VPG p.77).

Taste and smell on the other hand, are the senses of difference: that is, the soul in taste and smell senses a body's real difference from itself. Accordingly, the natural phenomena of odor (i.e. "particularized airiness")<sup>148</sup> and taste ("particularized water")<sup>149</sup> involve the sensed body literally breaking apart, becoming a gas or a liquid (respectively).<sup>150</sup> Given that in his deduction of the elements in the mechanics section of the *Philosophy of Nature* Hegel calls air the element of "undifferentiated simplicity"<sup>151</sup> (as opposed to the "elements of opposition," viz. fire<sup>152</sup> and water<sup>153</sup>), it seems unclear why in the physics section he locates particularized airiness (i.e. odor) as a "property of opposition." It makes sense however when we consider that odor is the result of a body's combustion, or catching fire (*Brennlichkeit*).<sup>154</sup> Indeed, Hegel notes in his paragraph on

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<sup>148</sup> *EPW* §321.

<sup>149</sup> *EPW* §322.

<sup>150</sup> Alison Stone for some reason considers the objects of sensation to be only "light, air, and earth" (*Petrified Intelligence* p.108). She briefly discusses sound (p.121) but does not explain how sound's apparent unrelatedness to the three "fundamental natural elements" (p.108) as she calls them. In discussing smell and taste she claims that both are related to air (p.121), though Hegel is very clear that the object of the sense of taste is "particularized water," the liquification of a solid body. Presumably she takes light, air and earth as the 'fundamental natural elements' because each is associated with one of the three major divisions of the senses: light is the object of (one form of) the sense of physical ideality, air is the object of (one form of) the sense of real difference, and earth is the object of the sense of concrete totality. But why she would exclude the natural phenomena of sound and particularized water from her list of 'fundamental natural elements'—especially given that Hegel mentions them explicitly in the *Anmerkung* to §401 when he deduces the senses—is anyone's guess. (See p.101n for a remark on "deduction" in Hegel).

<sup>151</sup> *EPW* §282.

<sup>152</sup> *EPW* §283.

<sup>153</sup> *EPW* §284.

<sup>154</sup> *EPW* §321. Similarly, Aristotle says that the sense of smell consists of fire (*Sense and Sensibilia* 438b20-21), since odor is a smoke-like evaporation, and smoke-like evaporations arise from fire (438b24-25).

fire that air is implicitly fire (as shown in its compression),<sup>155</sup> i.e. the power to decompose matter. As air is the element of matter's combustibility, so water is the element of its solubility.<sup>156</sup> In both cases, a body's difference from itself, the material externality of its parts to each other, is rendered a *real* difference when the body is brought into relation with these elements: the body physically breaks apart. This breaking apart of a body, the real manifestation of its opposition to itself, is at once an event in nature and a sensible phenomenon for the soul (either as odor or taste).

Hegel hardly mentions the sense of touch in the *Haupttext*: he merely lists it along with the others and gives its objects (weight, heat, and shape).<sup>157</sup> In the *Vorlesungen* from 1827/28 Hegel has little more to say about it. As far as the different senses are concerned, he seems mainly concerned in these lectures to demonstrate how the different senses vary with respect to the extent to which the soul feels *itself* in its feeling of other objects: "In hearing and seeing we do not feel [*empfinden*] ourselves, in smell and taste we begin to, and in touch [*Fühlen*] as such the return [to the self] is completed, when I feel something, I feel it resist me."<sup>158</sup>

We will not place much emphasis on the fact that the soul is able to feel itself more in touch than in the other senses because, as we will see below, the soul's 'mixing' with its body (i.e. the fact that the soul feels *through* corporeal sense organs) has as a result that *despite* the relatively greater degree of self-feeling in touch, *all* sensation is

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<sup>155</sup> *EPW* §283.

<sup>156</sup> *EPW* §322.

<sup>157</sup> *EPW* §401A.

<sup>158</sup> *VP* p.76.

characterized by a certain *failure* to feel certain natural determinations, namely those of one's own body—i.e. a failure to feel *oneself* (this will become clear below). Instead, here we will focus on how touch unites the ideality peculiar to sight and hearing with the difference peculiar to smell and taste. As sight and hearing sense a body's unity with itself, and smell and taste sense a body's difference from itself, touch senses a body's unity with and difference from itself: this is precisely how Hegel understands solidity and gravity (the objects of the sense of touch).

What is solid and has weight and seeks its own center, holding itself together and repelling other bodies: thus it has a unity with itself that is mediated with its difference from other bodies.<sup>159</sup> The visible body was also determinate (i.e. it was a *certain* color, different from other colors), but this determinacy was only implicit in the visible body: only when it is juxtaposed with a body of another color does its determinacy appear (and even then, its determinacy is only *for us*).<sup>160</sup> The same can be said of the sonorous body: it has a determinacy (of pitch and timbre), but this determinacy is only manifest when the body sounds simultaneous with other bodies, and it is only *we* who recognize its sonorous determinacy. Conversely, smell and taste explicitly display a body's difference from

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<sup>159</sup> Since sound is also derivative of the cohesion of bodies, it may be unclear why touch is the sense of concrete totality while hearing is a sense of only physical *ideality*: i.e. it may be unclear why sound, is not an expression of a body's being-for-itself just as much as solidity and weight are. However, sound is essentially an transient phenomenon: the vibration which produces the sound subsides and the parts of the body return to their mutual externality, their mere corporeity. The body then once again returns to silence, no longer expresses its ideality. Solidity on the other hand is an expression of a body's ideality (perceptible for touch) that the body has in its own right: an object's solidity does not require an outside object to strike it as its sonority requires. Thus solidity is not ephemeral like sound is. Sound is ephemeral precisely because it is an *abstraction* from the material separateness of its parts. This unsublated separateness eventually overcomes the sonorous expression of unity, imposing silence on the body. Solidity and weight on the other hand are expressions of a body's unity with itself that is mediated through its opposition to other bodies.

<sup>160</sup> See p. 71n for a remark on the use of the locution "for us."

itself, but the *unity* of the body in these phenomena is only *for us*: as a body disperses into a gaseous haze or dissolves in water, we are able to tell that the whole body (now *really* separated from itself) is unified in its odor or its taste, but this unity is not *for* the body in either case (the body itself simply flees from itself). In touch on the other hand, the body itself has a sort of “being-for-itself”<sup>161</sup>: it has its unity by mediation with its other (i.e. it has reduced its other to a mere moment of its return to unity with itself). By concentrating in on itself, the solid object repels other objects, thus maintaining its identity and exhibiting what we might call a *differentiated* rather than a *simple* ideality.

Before moving on to the next section, let us briefly note in passing that Hegel’s deduction of the various senses can be compared to the cosmogony and anthropogony given in Plato’s *Timaeus*. There Plato explains how the world soul and the human soul are both created by mixing the forms of identity, difference and being: that both the world soul and human souls are made from the same stuff (the mixture of these forms) accounts for the affinity between the intelligent human soul and the intelligibility of nature, i.e. for how human beings can know these forms as they exist concretely in the world. Similarly, in his philosophy of nature Hegel deduces natural phenomena which express a body’s identity with itself (viz. light/color and sound), natural phenomena which express a body’s difference from itself (odor and taste), and natural phenomena which express a body’s being-for-itself, i.e. its unity with itself mediated with its difference with itself and other objects (solidity, weight). These natural phenomena are the determinations of ‘the

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<sup>161</sup> *EPW* §96.

world's soul'<sup>162</sup> as it were, which is 'made of the same stuff'<sup>163</sup> as the human soul.

Thus the human senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch are able to perceive the various natural determinations of the world.

*Sensation: what in nature is sensed*

Now that we have had an introduction to the five senses and their objects, we can see that sensation is grossly misrepresented by many of those who imagine themselves to be its champions: viz., the materialists. Our investigation into the soul and its senses makes it clear that the sensing soul and the body cannot be likened to a spider in its web,<sup>164</sup> any disturbance to the latter of which (which could only be produced *mechanically*) is materially communicated to the former (itself considered as something material). To be sure, sensation involves corporeal objects, and a subject which is in some sense corporeal as well: but a sensation is not a physical event occurring in the brain. Hegel is not opposed to the idea that the body is materially affected in sensation; he is only opposed to the contention that this physical affection *is* the sensation.

Sensation is a form (albeit a crude one) of spirit: i.e. it is a way in which the idea knows itself. It is *the idea* (as nature) which is sensed (in e.g. a sound), and it is *the idea* (as spirit, specifically the soul) which does the sensing. We should not conceive of sensation therefore as the chance meeting (or even the mechanically necessary meeting) of two internally unrelated bodies, such that one leaves its imprint on the other as a signet

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<sup>162</sup> Of course, this analogy is complicated by the fact that Hegel uses the term "world soul [*Weltseele*]" (*EPW* §391) as well, but color, sound, odor, taste and solidity are not determinations of the *Weltseele* as Hegel understands it.

<sup>163</sup> The affinity of the soul with nature for Hegel lies not in the actions of a demiurge, but rather in the fact that everything in nature and spirit is only one and the same idea.

<sup>164</sup> Diderot, *Le rêve de d'Alembert* pp.46-47.



ring leaves its imprint on wax,<sup>165</sup> and take this imprint for the sensation. This materialist account fails as much in its explanation of nature as in its explanation of spirit: for, not only is spirit in itself receptive to nature (i.e. to its own self, viz. the idea, though in a different form), but also, nature according to its own essence sublates its externality to itself, and offers itself up as an ideality to be known by spirit.<sup>166</sup> To see how this occurs, we must look back to the philosophy of nature, concerning the indispensability of which for understanding sensation, Hegel leaves no doubt.<sup>167</sup>

We have already discussed the natural phenomena which each sense perceives in the foregoing section. To illustrate our claim here (viz., that the sensing soul does not receive the sensation as a bare given), let us return to our account of sound and hearing. A sound is the expression of a body's ideality, its unity, in opposition to the differences between its parts. Since nature is defined as the externality of parts to each other,<sup>168</sup> and sound is precisely the momentary cancelling of this difference, it seems that sound is in some sense not a natural phenomenon—or at least not merely a natural phenomenon.

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<sup>165</sup> Plato, *Theaetetus* 191b-e.

<sup>166</sup> Thus although Hegel says that everything in the intellect is first in sensation (*EPW* §§8A, 400A), we should not take this to mean that we receive sensations of natural objects as characters are imprinted on a blank slate, and that even in thought our contents retain the arbitrariness and positivity that would belong to such an origin. On the contrary, *even in sensation*, our contents are not foreign articles thrust into the soul from an alien nature. Rather, it belongs to the essence of nature to make itself known to spirit. Thus we would say that Halbig goes too far when he describes Hegel's account of sensation as a "concession" to sensualism that supports a "foundationalist [*fundamentalistischen*]" theory of knowledge (*Objektives Denken*, p.55). To be sure, spirit must still go to work on its sensible contents, negating them and working them up into thoughts (pp.55-56), but one must recognize that *even before it is sensed*, a natural determination (e.g. a sound) is in-itself comprehensible.

<sup>167</sup> Hegel says: "The general forms of sensations are related to the various physical and chemical determinacies of natural objects (which are proved as necessary in the philosophy of nature), and are mediated by the various sense organs" (*EPW* §401Z p.103); also "we accepted the content of *external* sensations from the foregoing philosophy of nature as having been proven there in its rational necessity" (*EPW* §401Z pp.110-111).

<sup>168</sup> *EPW* §247.

Indeed, Hegel's philosophy of nature shows that in the phenomena which are the objects of sense (color/light, sound, odor, taste, shape, weight), nature in some sense spiritualizes itself, makes itself into something that is perhaps more proper to spirit than it is to nature.

Empiricists typically explain the presence of abstract ideas in the mind by arguing that these ideas are the products of the mind's activity on the sense data received materially from nature (by some action of nature on our sense organs).<sup>169</sup> In light of Hegel's analyses of the phenomena in nature which we sense and our senses themselves, it cannot be the case that nature forces itself materially on the sense organs (by physically bombarding them for example), violently introducing 'sense data' into the mind, and the mind is subsequently somehow able to alter the essential nature of this data by transforming it into immaterial 'ideas.' On the contrary, it is not 'in the mind' that the boundary between nature and spirit is traversed. Rather, it is nature which works *itself* up into certain quasi-spiritual phenomena which can be sensed by the soul.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan* pp.21-27, 41-46; Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* book II chapter 1 §§1-4; Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* book I part I §§1-7, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* §§1-3.

<sup>170</sup> Thus while Hegel does speak of nature in the following way: "Nature is spirit alienated from itself, it is that in which spirit *lets itself go*, a Bacchic God, who does not restrain himself or hold himself together; in nature the concept's unity is hidden," he goes on to say: "The thinking consideration of nature must consider how nature is in itself this process of becoming spirit and sublating its otherness—and how in each stage of nature the idea is present; alienated from the idea, nature is only the corpse of the understanding. Nature is however only in itself the idea, therefore Schelling called it petrified intelligence, and others have even called it frozen intelligence; however, God does not remain petrified and dead, rather the stones cry out and raise themselves [or, sublimate themselves, *heben sich... auf*] to spirit" (*EPW* §247Z p.25). This seems to be a reference to Orpheus, the mythical poet who, it is said, gave the Greeks their religion (Pausanias, *Guide to Greece* 9.30.5) in songs which drew birds in the sky and fish in the sea toward him, and even set the trees and the stones in motion (Apollodorus, *Library* I.14, Apollonius Rhodius *The Voyage of Argo* I.23-34). Yet Hegel is saying that the *stones themselves* sublimate themselves to spirit, that nature itself offers itself up to be known as an ideality, that Orpheus is not necessary. Hegel's previous reference to Dionysos (i.e. "the Bacchic God") makes sense therefore, given that it is said that the maenads, wild devotees of Dionysos were the ones who killed Orpheus (Pausanias, *Guide to Greece* 9.30.5).

Thus when Hegel says that sound is “the negation of materiality”<sup>171</sup> he means that sound is the negation of a body’s externality to itself, or that in it which is merely natural. That is why while a silent body is simply parts outside of parts, when struck and made sonorous, it expresses its unity (the *physical ideality* of its parts to the whole) in a single tone. Accordingly, as the *negation* of materiality, sound is the negation of the naturalness of a body, its transmutation into something more akin to spirit—thus Hegel refers to sound as “the soul of matter,”<sup>172</sup> and the “abstract soul”<sup>173</sup> of a body. He also calls sound “soul-like” (*Seelenhaftigkeit, Seelenhafte, Seelenhaftes, Seelenhaften*) several times.<sup>174</sup>

Certainly, dead matter, whether sonorous or not, has no soul in the proper sense: sound remains in some sense a *natural* phenomenon, insofar as even in being sonorous, a body does not *know itself* to be the idea. However, if we consider the way Aristotle used the term soul (*psyche*) (and recall how highly Hegel regarded Aristotle’s books on the soul<sup>175</sup>), we will be able to see what Hegel meant in calling sound matter’s ‘soul.’

For Aristotle, a body’s soul is what makes the body what it is: i.e. it is the body’s *logos*.<sup>176</sup> For this reason, the soul is distinct (*for our thought*) from a body’s matter, which

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<sup>171</sup> *EPW* §401Z p.103.

<sup>172</sup> *EPW* §307Z p.196.

<sup>173</sup> *EPW* §323Z p.273.

<sup>174</sup> *EPW* §300&Z, §316Z.

<sup>175</sup> *EPW* §378.

<sup>176</sup> Aristotle, *De Anima* 412b10-12.

does not make a body what it is<sup>177</sup> (though the soul may be inseparable from the body *in fact*). In other words, the soul of a body is a body's *actuality*,<sup>178</sup> but 'a body's actuality' can mean either: (1) the *possession* of knowledge; or (2) the contemplation, or the exercise of knowledge. In other words, the soul of a body can be either the body's passive possession of a certain rationality, or its active *cognition* of a certain rationality. After explaining actuality in this way, Aristotle says that the soul of a body is actuality as the *possession* of knowledge.<sup>179</sup>

Likewise, for Hegel, for a body to be an *actual* body (i.e. a single, internally coherent object) it must overcome the self-externality characteristic of everything material: but this overcoming of its externality (the condition of a body's actuality) is (to take one example) the body's sonorousness. Sound can therefore be seen as *the soul of a body*—and Hegel calls such. Of course, sound is the 'soul' of a body only in the sense of *possessing* a certain intelligible character, not in the sense of *actively knowing* or *contemplating* this intelligible character (which is the sense of "soul" when it refers to the *human* soul). However, it is (in some sense) sonorousness which makes a body a body, fulfilling Aristotle's criterion for a soul (given at 412b10-12): i.e. sound is the rationality that a body possesses, its knowability, and thus in some (analogical) sense, a body's "soul."<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Rather, matter is only a thing's *potential* to be this or that (and equally its potential *not* to be this or that) (*Metaphysics* 1032a20-23).

<sup>178</sup> Aristotle, *De Anima* 412a21-22.

<sup>179</sup> Aristotle, *De Anima* 412a23-27.

<sup>180</sup> See also Michael Wolff's incisive analysis of Hegel's evocation of Aristotle's passive *nous* in *EPW* §389: "The sensing soul is the same as the one that is sensible [*empfindbar*] (αἰσθητόν) of things; it is

It is worth restating that sound is not the soul of a body in the same way that the human, sentient soul is. Sound is merely a body's *possession* of a *logos* or concept: by being sonorous, a body is *intelligible*, but not for that reason *intelligent*. The human soul on the other hand is not merely the human body's *possession* of a *logos* or concept (except insofar as the human body too is physical and can emit sound when struck, but then we are not talking about the soul of this body *insofar as it is human*), but rather its *exercise*, the *actuality* of this *logos* in the sensing of it. Thus a bell for example presents its *logos*, its 'soul' to the human sentient soul in its sound. The human soul in its sensation of this sound communes with the sonorous body in its (sonorous) *form*, but not its matter: but it is not because of an inability or defect in the sentient soul that it does not commune with the sonorous body's matter; rather, it is because in sounding, this body has temporarily cancelled its own materiality.

Thus though the sensation is not the same as the body in the body's materiality, the sensation is not for that reason *only a defective copy* of the *real* object existing in external reality. What the body is *most truly* is how it presents itself as something capable of being sensed (here, a sound). The sensation of the bell's tone is in fact *more*, not less adequate to the concept of what the bell *is* most properly, because the sensation is not

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indeed not itself identical with sensible [*empfindbar*] (material) things ("for, the stone is not in the soul"), but with the sensible form (τα εἶδη τὰ αἰσθητά) of things. Sensation (αἴσθησις) is nothing but the form of those sensible things (431b27-432a3). Hegel's conception of the soul as "ideality" takes up the matter as one sees here clearly, after and even terminologically directly from the Aristotelian conception of the εἶδος εἶδων. [...] The actuality of the sensible [*Empfindbaren*], i.e. the form, which the sensible thing first *makes* actually sensible, and the actuality of sensation [*Empfindens*], thus the form in which the actual sensing [*Empfindung*] consists, is one and the same; "the being [*das Sein*]" however is not the same for the sensible [*Empfindbare*] and the sensation [*Empfinden*]" (*Das Körper-Seele Problem* p.54).

burdened with materiality as the bell is.<sup>181</sup> To be sure, the body's externality to itself is real, just as its unity is, but this externality does not escape sensation: it is apprehended in smell and taste, as we saw above.

This account agrees with Aristotle's broader theory of sensation as the soul's apprehension of the *form* presented to it materially (i.e. in an informed material object), and becoming this form alone, leaving the matter behind.<sup>182</sup> The materialist, supposedly the champion of nature, thus does not even give nature enough credit: for, the materialist fails to see that even nature is dignified enough to sublate its own self-externality and render itself intelligible. To truly honor nature requires recognizing this, and rejecting the materialist explanation as a patent absurdity.

We should also note that Hegel also calls other natural phenomena the "soul [*Seele*]" of the a body or matter, such as specific gravity,<sup>183</sup> heat<sup>184</sup> (as well as fire<sup>185</sup>),

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<sup>181</sup> That sensation is of a higher order than the mere *possession* of rationality (as e.g. in nature) should lead us to dispute the poets when they said that after being blinded by Oinopion, Orion had a boy lead him to the place where the sun rises (and thus the place where the sun's rays are the brightest), and by standing before the sun at such close quarters, Orion's sight was restored (Apollodorus, *Library* 1.25-26). Light, no matter how strong, only possesses passively a sort of intelligibility, and hence is of a *lower* order of actuality than sight, the active knowing of the intelligibility of something illuminated. Light, for Hegel, is nothing without (dark, formless) matter which it illuminates, producing the phenomenon of color (*EPW* §320). Sight however, is not burdened with a relation to matter as light is: sight simply takes on the intelligible form of that which is illuminated, and discards the matter. It is sight therefore that *liberates* the intelligible form from its material prison in nature; it is not light that brings sight into being (light is necessary only as sight's *presupposition*). Greek religion redeemed itself however in esteeming Apollo (the "far-seeing" god, associated with the active knowing of prophecy) more highly than his grandfather Helios (the sun, the passive intelligibility of light). Despite his protestations to the contrary, Plato is the philosopher who would be found in this case squarely on the side of the poets, insofar as he says that sight is not the sun, as thinking is not the good, but the sun allows us to see as the good allows us to think (*Republic* 508d-e).

<sup>182</sup> Aristotle, *De Anima* 424a17-23.

<sup>183</sup> *EPW* §318Z.

<sup>184</sup> *EPW* §303Z.

<sup>185</sup> *EPW* §336Z.

light,<sup>186</sup> and shape generally<sup>187</sup> (as well as specific determinations of shape: magnetism,<sup>188</sup> and crystal<sup>189</sup>). It is no coincidence that these natural phenomena are called soul, insofar as these are the *logoi* that nature *possesses* without contemplating them; i.e. it is by these phenomena that nature offers itself up (as *possessing* reason) to be known (contemplated) by the sentient soul, through sight (which sees light) and touch (which feels weight, heat, and shape).

Moreover, for Aristotle it is clear that both possessing knowledge and contemplation are ways a body can be actual (i.e. can ‘have’ a soul) because, as Aristotle says, both sleeping and waking depend on the existence of a soul, and waking is analogous to contemplation, while sleeping is analogous to the mere possession of knowledge.<sup>190</sup> We could therefore give the metaphor that a sonorous object is a sleeping sentient soul, while a sentient soul is an awoken sonorous object. The emergence of sentient life is thus the *awakening of matter or of nature* in some sense, when matter (in the form of the body with a sentient soul) begins not merely to possess the forms of nature, but rather to contemplate them.

But though the human soul differs from what we might analogously call the “soul” of another body (viz. its sonorousness) insofar as the former thinks the intelligibility that the latter only passively possesses, we should not lose sight of the fact

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<sup>186</sup> EPW §325, and in the *Zusätze* to §§317, 324, 341.

<sup>187</sup> EPW §307Z.

<sup>188</sup> EPW §314

<sup>189</sup> EPW §315Z: here it is called both soul (*Seele*) and soul-like (*Seelenhafte*).

<sup>190</sup> Aristotle, *De Anima* 412a23-27.

that there is a moment of mere *naturalness* even in the human soul: the soul cannot sense except by being embodied, i.e. except by being in some sense material and natural. Let us examine now the implications of this embodiment and what it means for sensation.

*Sensation: the soul as 'mixed' with its body*

The embodiment of the sensing soul is not insignificant: it is only because the sensing soul is embodied that it has some way to mediate its relationship to its contents (and this is what separates sensation from the forms of “natural changes”). This mediation allows the universal (the soul) to be determined (in a singular sensation) and yet still remain universal. That the senses perform this mediating function for Hegel means that: (1) individual contents of the soul are ‘in’ the soul in virtue of sensation (this is the connection between particular and singular, or P—S); (2) the soul has as its own immanent determinacy the division into the senses (this is the connection between universal and particular, U—P, thus making possible the syllogism, U—P—S).

Hegel uses two examples to show how in sensation the soul maintains itself as universal even as it is determined. He says first that colored water is not sentient because in the water, the determination (the color) permeates it completely; it is only *for us* that the water (as universal) is distinct from its determination.<sup>191</sup> Later he explains that the soul is sentient because it knows itself to be capable of being determined in various, even contrary ways, while remaining itself. If the soul could see only blue, Hegel says, then

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<sup>191</sup> *EPW* §399Z p.96. See p.71n for a remark on the use of the locution “for us.”



this determination would be a limitation of it: yet it senses because it knows blue as a *particular* color among others.<sup>192</sup>

Hegel's point here is familiar because it is also Aristotle's point in *De Anima* (III, 4): viz., that the intellect must be "unmixed [ $\alpha\mu\iota\gamma\eta$ ],"<sup>193</sup> i.e. must be distinct in its universality from any determination (i.e. for Hegel, any sensation). Were the soul to be 'mixed,' determined in such a way that the soul's universality would lose itself in this determinacy, then nothing would be sensed, and the soul would be rather like colored water: completely penetrated by its determinacy. The soul senses only because it is at once determined in a certain way (e.g. sensing blue), and it knows itself as something distinct from this determinacy. However, because the soul is corporeal, it is always necessarily 'mixed' in some way, though this mixing only limits without eradicating its ability to sense.

For an example, let us consider the sense of touch: what we call "room temperature" is simply the temperature to which we are insensible because it is felt as neither cold nor hot (and thus is not felt at all). We are insensible to a certain (range of) temperature because we sense corporeally, such that unlike Aristotle's intellect, our skin (the part of our body in which our soul senses heat and cold) is *not* "unmixed," since as corporeal, it is always already a certain temperature. In other words, our soul is always already (as far as sensation of heat and cold is concerned) thoroughly penetrated by this determinacy. As a result, the soul does not know itself as distinct from this determinacy—i.e. does not maintain its universality in the face of this determinacy, and is

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<sup>192</sup> *EPW* §401Z p.103.

<sup>193</sup> *De Anima* 429a18.

as colored water is with respect to its chromatic determinacy. The soul instead only feels heat or cold when a temperature varies from the temperature by which it is determined.

Thus because the soul is mixed with its body, it senses only determinations which vary from its own—i.e. the soul at this stage does not feel *itself*. Yet in his lectures Hegel says that while in the senses of sight and hearing one does not feel oneself at all, in smell and taste, self-feeling begins, and in touch the return to oneself is completed, insofar as when I feel an object, I feel it resisting me.<sup>194</sup> This is true, and does not contradict the interpretation I am giving here. What I am saying is that in *all* sensation the soul is mixed with its body, i.e. senses through material sense organs which are already determined in certain ways. This prior determination of the sense organs renders the soul *insensible* to certain determinations in nature (room temperature is the best example). The self-feeling the soul has in touch is only present when the ensouled body touches something that *differs* from its own natural determinacy.

Were the soul to sense incorporeally, it would not have such limitations because it would be “unmixed.”<sup>195</sup> Since however the soul is embodied (and this body is always already determined in certain natural ways), the soul is limited in what it can sense, and its determinations (e.g. the temperature of its skin) determine for it *how* it will sense things (e.g. what will be felt as cold and what will be felt as hot). We must note however that the section on sensation concerns *the senses*, and only derivatively the (material)

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<sup>194</sup> VPG p.76.

<sup>195</sup> Of course, *spirit* does know things incorporeally, but such kinds of knowing are not under examination here.

*sense organs*. The examination of the sense organs as features of merely natural life belongs rather to the philosophy of nature.

The significance of the senses is that they mediate between the soul (as the universal) and its (singular) contents. What this means of course is that it is in virtue of the senses that the soul (which is *one*) is able to relate cognitively to its contents (which are many). The senses are many as well, to be sure; and it is not simply because the senses are *fewer in number* (numbering only five) than the infinitely varied possible contents that they act as a mean between the soul and these contents. Were that the case, then we would still require some mediation between the (one, universal) soul and these (many, individual) senses: even if we reduced the mediation to *two* particular terms, these would still be many and hence in a certain sense incommensurate with the *one* soul; or, if we arrived at a *single* particular term, this would be perhaps commensurate with the soul, but not with the manifold content.

However, the mediating function of the senses is not based on their being *quantitatively* in the middle of the soul and its sensible content, so the foregoing objections fall flat. Rather, the multiplicity of the senses and the unity of the soul are incommensurate only for the understanding, but not for reason: for, reason is able to grasp spirit as *self-determining*, and thus to grasp the sensitive soul as determining *its own self* into five senses (grouped into three kinds of senses). We saw above the logic underlying the determination of the soul into its senses (viz. that this determination of the soul is a spiritual concretion of the ontological structures<sup>196</sup> which are concretized in

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<sup>196</sup> It would take us too far afield to delve into the *Science of Logic* to show precisely which ontological structures are being concretized in the sensed natural phenomena and the senses of the soul. Allow me

nature as the phenomena which are sensed). That the soul is self-determining in this way means that the distinctions between the senses are contained within the soul itself, in its concept.<sup>197</sup>

*Sensation: the corporealization of emotions*

However, sensation concerns not only the mediation which allows a singular sensation received from external nature to be felt by the soul, but also the mediation which allows determinations of the soul to be expressed corporeally.<sup>198</sup> In both cases, sensation is the mediation in virtue of which the abstract distinction between what is external and natural on the one hand and what is internal and spiritual on the other collapses. When a spiritual content is thus corporealized, it is *felt*.<sup>199</sup> In order to understand what we might call the ‘spiritualization’ of a natural content (e.g. a sound) we had to look back to the philosophy of nature in order to see how such natural phenomena were deduced. Likewise, it would be appropriate here to see how, if certain spiritual contents are to be ‘naturalized’ in sensation, such spiritual contents are deduced. These spiritual contents are emotions such as anger, sadness, shame, grief, joy, etc. A study of

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simply to propose here without argument that these structures are identity, distinction and ground (*EPW* §§115-122), i.e. identity in abstraction from difference (concretized in light/color and sound as well as in sight and hearing), difference in abstraction from identity (concretized in odor and taste as well as in the senses of smell and taste) and the mediated unity of identity and difference (concretized in the tangible phenomena and the sense of touch).

<sup>197</sup> Of course, the soul is self-determining only in a qualified way. The sensitive soul does not know itself as determining itself in its senses, it simply finds itself this way, as it finds its sensible content given to it. Yet *for us* those determinations can be deduced from the soul itself in its universality; and even for the soul, it returns to itself in its sensation of a singular content (though this return presupposes material we have yet to deduce, e.g. self-feeling and habit). (See p.71n for a remark on the use of the locution “for us,” and p.101n for a remark on “deduction” in Hegel).

<sup>198</sup> *EPW* §400Z p.99.

<sup>199</sup> *EPW* §401. See also *VP* p.75.

sensation should be able to refer to what these emotions are, and also show how and why they are corporealized in precisely the way that they are (as e.g. shame is corporealized in the reddening of the face, anger in the burning in the chest, etc.).

Of course, to give such an explanation is not to deny that a causal series can be traced back by listing only “natural” terms: a dermatologist (who understands the human being as a mere biological organism) would say that the reddening of the face for example is caused by rushing of blood to capillaries in the face, and this is itself caused by hyperactivity of the nervous system, perhaps as a result of stress (stress of course being understood as something physical and empirically observable for an outside observer). One could propose such a ‘naturalistic’ explanation for hearing a sound as well (making the sound into a disturbance in the air, and the sensation into a physical affection in the inner ear). Hegel would not deny that such a series of causes and effects do occur, but he would deny that the phenomenon of sound can be reduced to *merely* material causes (since a sound is a body’s momentary sublation of its materiality). Likewise, Hegel would not deny that the dermatologist’s explanation of blushing does refer to genuine natural facts. However, he would deny that the phenomenon of blushing can be reduced to *merely* organic causes. The proof for this takes a different course from that of the spiritualization of nature: it cannot be the demonstration that the phenomenon in question must be understood as the overcoming of materiality, because the phenomenon in question is rather the *materialization* of spirit, spirit’s overcoming of its *mere* or abstract ideality, its determination of itself in physical reality. The demonstration that this must occur generally is of course the deduction of spirit itself, as outlined in the

paragraphs devoted to the “concept of spirit.”<sup>200</sup> There it is deduced that spirit must “reveal” or “manifest” itself in determinacy.<sup>201</sup> The whole of the philosophy of spirit is the deduction of the specific ways in which spirit thus reveals itself, and of spirit’s knowledge of itself in its revelation. The anthropology concerns the way spirit reveals itself in what would otherwise be the merely natural or organic body of the human being, and this includes phenomena such as blushing, whereby spiritual contents like shame are given material expression. This ‘material expression’ of an emotion is an expression for another (who can perceive the reddening of the ashamed person’s face) and for the ashamed person (for whom the phenomenon of blushing is also the *feeling* of his or her shame). We do not have the luxury of a separate section to which we can look for a more intensive treatment of such emotions in themselves (apart from their ‘naturalization’ or manifestation in sensation), as we have the philosophy of nature where are deduced the natural phenomena, the account of the ‘spiritualization’ of which is given later in the section on sensation. We have therefore to be content with the four paragraphs (along with their *Anmerkungen* and *Zusätze*) that Hegel devotes to sensation in the anthropology.

The importance of the materialization of the emotions is the very fact that they are materialized, i.e. that a distinctively human, spiritual idea like shame should be corporealized, and *felt* (rather than merely being an object of reflective thought). A complete account of these emotions would require a systematic deduction of the various emotions themselves, apart from their manifestation in sensation. I suspect that such a

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<sup>200</sup> *EPW* §§381-384. See chapter two for my discussion of these paragraphs.

<sup>201</sup> *EPW* §§383-384.

deduction would have to be integrated into the practical spirit section of the psychology. The idea of such a deduction is certainly exciting, but it would be such a complicated project (involving going into the details of the psychology section) that it is impossible to attempt it here. Once the various emotions are deduced and understood systematically, in relation to each other and the concept of practical spirit, the precise ways in which emotions are corporealized would have to be systematically justified. Perhaps a more able student of Hegel than myself will take up this project.

Though he does not venture such a deduction, Halbig does argue for a relationship between the corporealization of the emotions and another part of the psychology, viz. “attention [*Aufmerksamkeit*]”<sup>202</sup> in the section on theoretical spirit. Halbig presents attention as a sort of inverse of the corporealization of the emotions in sensation: whereas in sensation mediated, spiritual contents are made to appear corporeally, or immediately, attention involves spiritual training that enables one to do the reverse, seeing beyond what is immediately present (as for example a botanist not only knows more about the plant, but actually sees more than does the person unschooled in botany)<sup>203</sup> It is thus as if natural phenomena (e.g. a plant) were the ‘corporealizations’ on the part of the idea of what are properly understood as spiritual contents, and it is spiritual development that allows us to see what the idea ‘means’ in its expression in nature. Halbig likewise relates the corporealization of emotions in the section on sensation to the role of “feeling” in the

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<sup>202</sup> *EPW* §448.

<sup>203</sup> Halbig, *Objektives Denken* pp.98-99. See also Hegel, *EPW* §448Z p.250.

philosophy of religion,<sup>204</sup> but we will discuss this in the next chapter (on the feeling soul).<sup>205</sup>

In closing let us note that at the end of the section on sensation, as the anthropology makes the transition from the natural soul to the feeling soul, the individual soul is posited as a world-soul (*Weltseele*),<sup>206</sup> a soul with its own (inner) world. It was of course originally the universal soul which was called a *Weltseele*.<sup>207</sup> The significance of designating the individual soul in this way is that it is posited that the individual soul is a universal with respect to the contents of its own inner world: these contents are its sensations, which are the collected *logoi* of all of nature. It remains ambiguous at this point what it means that the individual soul is somehow lord over all of nature, yet also corporeally limited (to its own particular body): the resolution of this ambiguity will be the object of the next part of the anthropology (and our next chapter) on *the feeling soul*.

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<sup>204</sup> *Objektives Denken* p.100.

<sup>205</sup> Barbara Merker correctly argues that the corporealization of the emotions in the sensation section must be understood in relation to habit (which belongs to the feeling soul section and which we will discuss in chapter five) („Über Gewohnheit“ pp.232-233).

<sup>206</sup> *EPW* §402Z p.120.

<sup>207</sup> *EPW* §391.



CHAPTER FIVE:  
THE FEELING SOUL AND THE ACTUAL SOUL

An overview of the chapter

In this chapter we will conclude our study of Hegel's anthropology with an explanation of the feeling soul section as well as the short, two paragraph section on the actual soul. The nature of the material makes necessary recourse to transcriptions from Hegel's lectures. As mentioned in chapter one, Hegel published his *Encyclopedia* only in outline (*im Grundrisse*), and this text was always intended to be supplemented by his lectures. We will make use of all pertinent lecture material in our investigation into the feeling soul and actual soul: both Erdmann's and Walter's transcripts from 1827/28 and Boumann's *Zusätze*. (See the beginning of chapter one for a statement on the use of this material).

However, before beginning let us give an overview of the chapter, including the conclusions of the dissertation as a whole. What I set about to show in this dissertation is that corporeity is more than mere extension, that spirit itself exists in immediate, corporeal form as the human body and soul. In analyzing the soul and the distinctly human body I have tried to show (in chapter four, continuing this chapter) how the various phenomena that Hegel calls "anthropological" cannot be understood as belonging only to organically determined animal experience of the world: rather, they must be understood as at once corporeal and distinctly human. The project of uncovering that

which is specifically “anthropological” in Hegel’s meaning of the term (i.e. that which concerns the specifically human type of embodiment) culminates here in chapter five as we explain the difference between sensation (*Empfindung*) and self-feeling (*Selbstgefühl*), the difference between self-feeling and habit (*Gewohnheit*), and the relations between all three phenomena. Let us briefly outline these relations.

Sensation, self-feeling, and habit are all concretions of spirit, and thus forms of knowledge. In sensation the soul knows the natural world surrounding it through mediation of its body and corporeal sense organs. However, this mediation introduces a certain wrinkle: because the human body and its sense organs are material (i.e. because the soul is ‘mixed’ with a body), they always already bear certain natural determinations (e.g. the skin is always already a certain temperature); as a result of this prior determination, the soul in sensation is unable to sense precisely those determinations which its body bears passively. For example, the precise measure of heat which already inheres in the skin is something which *cannot be sensed* by the soul, even in other objects: thus to say that a certain object is “room temperature” is only to say that in sensation the soul is unable to sense any temperature in that object at all (because the temperature of the object is the same as the body’s own temperature). Thus the mediation in virtue of which sensation is possible (viz. the body and its senses) also restricts the scope of sensation, rendering certain natural determinations *insensible*, viz. the determinations belonging to the body itself. In other words, the sentient soul is able to sense all of nature except for its own corporeity: it can sense everything but itself.

Feeling is distinct from sensation insofar as feeling dispenses with the form of mediation proper to sensation: i.e. feeling is a form of affective knowing unmediated by the body and its sense organs—an immediate form of affective knowing. What stands out most clearly in Hegel’s account of feeling is its aberrant nature and the disastrous effects that come from a soul being stuck in this form of spirit. However, we must not fail to see that the form of mediation proper to sensation (the abandonment of which characterizes feeling) has its own drawbacks: sensation of most of nature was purchased at the price of insensibility to the determinations of the human body itself (as well as any other objects with like determinations). By circumventing sensation’s form of mediation, and allowing itself to be affected without the mediation of the body and its sense organs, the feeling soul acquires the ability to *feel its own self* (which the soul in sensation cannot do)—though with the disadvantage of being able to feel only itself, i.e. being unable to distinguish itself from anything felt (thus as we will see, all feeling is implicitly “self-feeling”). Such is the consequence of the feeling soul’s foregoing of any form of mediation at all.

Habit is the reintroduction of a form of mediation: one that is different from the one belonging to sensation. Rather than relying on the naturally given mediation provided by the body and its sense organs (as the soul in sensation does), habit is spirit’s creation of its own mediation between itself and its contents (i.e. its feelings). As a mediated form of experience, habit differs from (unmediated) self-feeling: its mediation allows the habituated soul to keep itself from becoming absorbed in any random feeling which presents itself—i.e. habit allows the soul to maintain its distinction from what it

experiences. However, habit differs also from sensation insofar as the soul's mediation of its relation to its contents through habit does not involve the foreclosure of the possibility of affective awareness of itself: habits are not a natural body (where by "body" we mean a form of mediation between the soul and its contents), but rather a spiritual 'body,' the body that spirit fashions for itself. Because habits are not natural, they are not subject to prior natural determination in the way that material body parts are: as a result, habits do not make themselves unknowable even as they make other contents knowable (as sensation through sense organs does). In fact, habits are created by the repeated experience of certain contents, and the consequent intimate familiarity that the soul acquires with these contents. Thus while the natural body (the form of mediation proper to sensation) relays sense data to the soul at the price of withholding any sensation of itself, the spiritual body (habit) is a form of mediation that puts determinacies which vary from it (i.e. the uncanny, atypical) in starker relief (and here it resembles sensation), but habit does so only through the *thorough knowledge* that the soul retains of the determinacies to which it has become habituated.

In sum: habit and sensation are both forms of mediation between the soul and its content (the one a spiritual body, the other a natural body); both habit and sensation allow for vivid affective knowing of contents which vary from the determinate character of the mediating form in question (whether the habit or the material sense organ); but while in sensation the soul is utterly ignorant of the natural determination of its own (natural) body (e.g. the temperature of its skin), in habit the soul is very familiar with the determinacy of its own (spiritual) body (i.e. the contents of its habits), since habits are

actually *acquired through* repeated experience of (and thus the thorough acquaintance with) such contents.

Armed with this overview, let us examine in a bit greater detail what the transition from sensation to feeling involves before we proceed to unfold the particular forms of feeling.

### From sensation to feeling

We are translating as “feeling soul” what Hegel calls “*die fühlende Seele*,” which is to be distinguished from the soul as sensation (*Empfindung*). For common parlance in English there is no clear distinction between the meanings of “feeling” and “sensation.” Nor, as Hegel notes, is there in German.<sup>1</sup> However, Hegel does give his own particular meanings to these terms. We would thus do well to review what special meaning Hegel gives to “sensation [*Empfindung*]” in order better to understand how it is different from what Hegel means by “feeling [*Gefühl*].”

As we saw in the last chapter, sensation is the final form of the *natural* soul. That sensation is a form of the *natural* soul means that it is spirit failing to distinguish itself from nature. It may help to recall other examples of such a failure on the part of spirit (as natural soul) to distinguish itself from nature. One example is how the individual soul feels itself immediately in the geographical and climatic conditions of nature.<sup>2</sup> For such a soul, gloomy weather is matched by its own gloomy mood: i.e. this soul unreflectively

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<sup>1</sup> *EPW* §402A. See also *VPG* p.69. DeVries argues that Hegel did not differentiate between *Empfindung* and *Gefühl* until the third edition (1830) of the *EPW* (*Hegel's Theory of Mental Activity* p.71). What I have just cited from Hegel's *VPG* comes from the winter semester of 1827/1828.

<sup>2</sup> *EPW* (1830) §§391-392.

sees all of nature as its own self, sympathetically feeling melancholic for example when the world grows dark. Take for example what we might call “reverse-anthropomorphic” expressions, expressions which take characteristics of natural phenomena and unreflectively transfer them to human beings: e.g. a person’s “gloomy mood” or “sunny disposition.” Expressions such as these, which pervade our language (and probably all languages), are visible protrusions of the largely submerged level of spirit which Hegel calls “the natural soul.”

To be sure, in some sense sensation is characterized precisely by its *successful* differentiation of itself from nature. Recall Hegel’s example of colored water<sup>3</sup>: the colored water lacks sensation because in it the universal (i.e. the water) is thoroughly pervaded by its (chromatic) determinacy; we are sensible on the other hand because we are able to distinguish a determinate sensation we have from our own souls. However because the soul is ‘mixed’ with its body (i.e. because the soul senses corporeally), it is insensible to natural determinations which are the same as the determinations of the corporeal organs with which it would sense such a natural determination.<sup>4</sup> Thus we are insensible to “room temperature” because it is the same as the temperature of our skin, the organ with which we sense heat. Our souls are in this case thoroughly pervaded with this tactile determination (viz. heat at approximately 70° F) because the corporeal organ

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<sup>3</sup> EPW §399Z p.96.

<sup>4</sup> As we mentioned in chapter four, in his lectures Hegel says that in the senses of “simple ideality” (viz. sight and hearing), one does not feel oneself at all, while in the senses of difference (smell and taste) self-feeling begins, and in touch the return to oneself is completed, insofar as when I feel an object, I feel it resisting me (VPG p.76). This is true, and does not contradict the interpretation I am giving here. What I am saying is that in *all* sensation the soul is mixed with its body, i.e. senses through material sense organs which are already determined in certain ways. This prior determination of the sense organs renders the soul *insensible* to certain determinations in nature (room temperature is the best example).

of tactile sensation (the skin and its nerves) bears the same determination in the merely passive way that all natural objects bear certain determinations. In other words, in this case the soul *does not* maintain its universality with respect to this determinacy. As a result, the soul is unable to distinguish itself as a universal (capable of a wider range of heat-sensations) from this particular determination (70° F), just as colored water is thoroughly pervaded by its chromatic determinacy.

To understand the difference between sensation and feeling, it is as important to understand what sensation *is not* as to know what it is: i.e. it is as important to know what the sensing soul *does not sense* as to know what it does sense; to put it still another way, it is as important to understand how the sensing soul is merely *natural* as to understand how the sensing soul is spirit. This is so because it is precisely in what sensation *is not*, in what the sensing soul *does not sense*, and in how it is merely *natural* that it differs from the feeling soul. What the sensing soul does not sense is that in virtue of which it remains a form of the merely natural soul: viz. its own corporeal determinacy. –This is precisely what the feeling soul feels. Thus while the sensing soul “maintains itself as a universal even in its determinacy,” it does so only in its sensation of a determinacy which differs from *its own* corporeal determinacy; it *fails* to maintain its universality with regard to its own corporeal determinacy.

Admittedly, the feeling soul too fails to maintain its universality in this way: it identifies immediately and wholly with its particular feeling. However, the difference between sensation and feeling lies in the fact that in sensation the soul senses only determinations which vary from its own: the sensing soul never takes its own natural

determinacy (e.g. the temperature of its skin) as its object, and thus is not even aware that it is determined in a particular way. On the other hand, feeling is the soul's awareness of itself as *particularized* in a certain affection: i.e. feeling is the soul's awareness of itself as something *determinate*.

The contrast between sensation and feeling can thus be superficially represented in the following way: sensation concerns the soul maintaining its universality while feeling concerns the soul knowing itself as a determinacy. Since the soul is the ideality of the *whole* body, and hence something universal, it can appear that feeling is somehow a defective form of spirit, insofar as in feeling the soul 'forgets' in some sense that it is something universal. However, we should not lose sight of the fact discussed in chapter four and recapitulated above, viz. that the sensing soul maintains its universality *only in a restricted way* (viz. with regard to natural determinations which vary from its own). Thus feeling is not a step back from the (ostensibly) more advanced psychic state of sensation. On the contrary, in feeling the soul begins to become aware of that of which the sensing soul remained ignorant: viz. its own corporeal determinacy.

A basic definition of feeling would be that it is the soul relating immediately to a certain content, such that the sense organs (which in sensation mediate the soul's relation to its content) are bypassed, with the result that the soul is unable to distinguish itself from its content. For example, under hypnosis a certain perception can be transmitted to the person under hypnosis without mediation of that person's sense organs. Thus if the hypnotist suggests to the person under hypnosis that the latter is standing on the African savannah observing a group of elephants bathe in a lake, the hypnotized person will



perceive such a scene, though she may be far from the African savannah and any elephants. The perception the hypnotist introduces into the hypnotized person's mind is *real* in the sense that it is really perceived, though it does not correspond to any real natural object(s). A person can have a perception that is 'real' in this sense (really perceived though without being the effect of real natural object) because the mind can have certain contents (feelings) to which the mind relates without mediation of its sense organs. If this kind of *immediate* feeling were impossible, then hypnosis would be impossible, and the hypnotic suggestion would be simply doubted or laughed at by the intended subject of hypnosis.

One might object that we need not posit such an extravagant explanation: after all, we 'perceive' things in some sense even when they are not present. In memory for example, I call to mind perceptions of objects which are no longer present physically. However, this objection conflates different kinds of 'perceptions.' The kind of feeling Hegel is talking about in the "feeling soul" section is an immediate feeling, which simply confronts the mind in the way that objects of sense perception are immediately perceived: if I open my eyes I am simply presented with many objects of sight. In contrast, to call to mind a previous perception stored in memory often requires an act of will; and even if the memory arises spontaneously (as can happen), it is not experienced in the same way as what Hegel calls a "feeling" is experienced.

For example, I may have seen a lion at the zoo, and subsequently returned home. I can then remember the lion, but in my remembering the lion is not immediately presented to me as a physically present object. If in my remembering I perceived the lion—now in

my apartment—in the same way as I perceived it earlier at the zoo, I would leap out of the window in terror of the lion apparently in my apartment. In fact, if memory operated in this way (presenting contents to the mind in the same way as immediate perception), I would not even be aware that there was such a thing as “memory,” because every time my memory presented a content to my mind, I would think that object (which in truth belongs to my past experience) was really present then and there. This should serve as an introduction to what “feeling” means for Hegel: viz., a content to which the soul relates immediately, without mediation of the sense organs.

Because the soul relates to any feeling it has *immediately*, it does not have the distance from its feelings that would allow it to distinguish even one feeling from another, and *a fortiori* the soul cannot integrate all of its various feelings into one coherent order. Accordingly, the feeling soul ‘has’ an indistinct mass of feelings (or, the soul is this indistinct mass of feelings, since it does not even distinguish itself from its feelings), with no order or mediation between them or between any one of them and the soul itself. Thus in the introductory paragraphs of the section on the feeling soul Hegel speaks of an “indeterminate pit”<sup>5</sup> into which are deposited all of the soul’s feelings. This pit is not *in* the feeling soul; rather, this pit *is* the feeling soul. In its initial definition, the feeling soul is thus only a hodgepodge of sensible determinations that *we* (concrete human beings whose experience is not limited by the moments in play in the soul’s sensation) know to have come from the mediation the various senses provided between the soul and external nature. Since however the senses do not function to mediate the soul’s relation to feelings of which it is already in possession, the ordering the senses

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<sup>5</sup> EPW §403A

provided in the soul's original reception of the determinations is not maintained. This storehouse may be called the soul's *unconscious*, since it contains feelings of which the soul is in possession, but to which it has problematic and irregular access, and over which it has yet to exert effective control.<sup>6</sup>

We will see examples of this when we analyze the second moment of the feeling soul: self-feeling, or madness. Here it will be enough to establish the necessity of such a common "pit" in which all of the various senses bury their feelings. This common storehouse of feelings is necessary because, as Plato said, it is not the *eyes* which see, or the *ears* which hear, but rather the *human being* (i.e. the soul) which sees and hears *through* these organs.<sup>7</sup> Thus despite the soul's differentiation into the different senses (and the mediation these senses provide), all of the differentiated content it receives in sensation is still gathered together as the content of the *single* (and in some sense still *undivided*) soul. This common pit must be indeterminate because no particular term has been deduced to mediate between the soul (as universal) and the indistinct mass of singular feelings, i.e. no *determining* principle has been deduced for the feeling soul.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> "When we have forgotten something, we are divided [into] the one, which we are in ourselves [*an uns*], and the other, consciousness, the power over us" (*VPG* p.88). This division is clearly the one which we today would call that between the conscious mind and the unconscious mind. Daniel Berthold-Bond argues that Hegel anticipates Freud in this respect. (*Hegel's Theory of Madness* p.135). Van Der Meulen too agrees that in the feeling soul section Hegel is concerned with what we today call the unconscious ("Hegels Lehre von Leib, Seele, und Geist" p.260). Of course, consciousness (*Bewußtsein*) as Hegel conceives it has not been deduced yet. (See p.101n for a remark on "deduction" in Hegel). The contrast here is thus more between the *awoken* mind and the mind which sleeps even in its waking state.

<sup>7</sup> *Theaetetus* 184b-d.

<sup>8</sup> As here Hegel discusses feeling as an abstract moment of subjective spirit, so Rousseau discusses a similar form of experience as an abstraction, a stage to be surpassed temporally in an individual life: "Suppose an infant had at its birth the size and strength of a grown man; that he emerged, so to speak, fully armed from his mother's womb like Pallas emerged from the brain of Jupiter; this man-child would be a perfect imbecile, an automaton, an immobile and nearly insensible statue: he would see nothing, he would

At this stage, it is only this single storehouse of feelings which makes an individual human being an individual human being. To be sure, the spatial limits of his body make an individual human being an individual in some sense: but only *mechanically*, not insofar as he is *human*. Even the one life toward which all of his organs work does not make the individual an individual insofar as he is human: rather, this only makes him an individual with regard to that in him which is merely animal. In contrast, the individuality of the human being lies at this stage in the unique collection of feelings which are in the “pit” of his feeling soul (we will see how this is so further on in this chapter).

In recent analytic “philosophy of mind” there has been some discussion about whether the mind is “modular,” i.e. whether the mind is composed of separate faculties which operate independently of each other and potentially at variance with each other.<sup>9</sup> That Hegel would be hostile to what is today proposed as “modularity” of the mind is clear from his disdain for the faculty psychology of his own time.<sup>10</sup> However, it could be argued that Hegel articulates a “modular” theory of the soul (or “mind”<sup>11</sup>) in his

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hear nothing, he would know no one, he would not know how to turn his eyes toward what he needed to see: not only would he not perceive any object outside of him, he would not even relate anything to the sense organ which made him perceive it; colors would be nothing in his eyes, sounds would be nothing in his ears, bodies he touched would be nothing for his own [body], he would not even know that he is one: the contact of his hands would be in his brain; all of his sensations would form around a single point; he would only exist as a common *sensorium*; he would have only one idea, that of himself, to which he would relate all of his sensations; and this idea, or rather this feeling [*sentiment*] would be the only thing that he would have in addition to what an ordinary infant has” (*Émile* tome premier pp.71-72).

<sup>9</sup> See for example Jerry Fodor, *The Modularity of Mind*, especially pp.23-38.

<sup>10</sup> See for example *EPW* §§379, 445A.

<sup>11</sup> I hesitate to identify Hegel’s anthropology with what in modern analytic philosophy is called “philosophy of mind” because what analytic philosophers generally mean by “mind” is what Hegel would call “consciousness [*Bewußtsein*]”: an empty subjectivity relating to external, corporeal objects.

deduction of the senses: is this not the splitting of the soul into different sensible faculties? Christoph Halbig correctly answers this question in the negative: even in its sensation (which would involve a determinate sense and an ostensibly ‘modular’ soul), the soul brings with it the “categorical determinations of thought.”<sup>12</sup> That is, even in sensation there are structures of subjectivity that undergird the differentiation into distinct senses, thereby guaranteeing the more fundamental unity of the soul as sensation.

However, while it is true that lower faculties like sensation must be understood in the context of the higher ones such as thought,<sup>13</sup> there is a simpler response to the objection Halbig raises (and one that does not give Hegel the appearance of a Kantian): viz., that feeling (which is clearly non-modular insofar as it bypasses the mediation of the senses and thus effaces all distinction of ‘faculties’ in the soul) and sensation (which can appear modular) are two sides of the same coin. While sensation concerns contents insofar as they are received and can be differentiated from the soul, feeling concerns contents immediately related to the soul, contents with which the soul identifies completely. Thus despite the apparent ‘modularity’ of the soul insofar as it is divided into distinct senses, these sensations are all simply deposited into the one ‘indeterminate pit’ of the feeling soul. Thus even the apparent modularity of the soul in sensation presupposes a deeper non-modularity. The examples we will examine of the feeling soul

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<sup>12</sup> *Objektives Denken* p.129.

<sup>13</sup> We saw in chapter three how more abstract forms of subjective spirit, such as those given in the anthropology and the phenomenology, are only truly understood when one is able to place them in the context of the forms of spirit given in the psychology section. Thus for example the affectivity of the human being is represented much more abstractly in the anthropology’s sections on sensation and feeling than it is in the psychology section.

will further show the ‘anti-modularity’ of the soul. Let us proceed now with the first stage of the feeling soul: the feeling soul in its immediacy.

### The feeling soul in its immediacy

We said above that as feeling soul, the soul feels itself in its contents, identifying with a determinate feeling. However, in its immediacy, the feeling soul does not *consciously* identify its content as its own self (as it will later, in self-feeling): the feeling soul in its immediacy has not even achieved the minimal separation from its content that such a conscious identification would require. By describing the soul at this stage as “immediate,” Hegel means precisely that between it and its content there is no relation properly speaking, but only a naïve identification which is *simple* (i.e. distinctionless and thus relationless).

### *What ‘genius’ means*

One phenomenon which for Hegel concretizes very well the identification of the soul with a determinate feeling, is the relation the feeling soul can have to its “genius.” Such a phenomenon can have various forms, but to understand any of them, we have to understand what “genius” means for Hegel. The term “genius” is most commonly used today to describe someone who is especially bright or talented, an innovator in a certain field. This usage is not wholly unrelated to what Hegel means, but much explanation is still required.

First of all, it is not appropriate to call someone a genius if this person simply follows a rule, applying it mechanically. Instead, a genius is one who inaugurates a completely new rule, in, say, painting or music: this is the way Kant describes the genius

in the third *Critique*.<sup>14</sup> Because genius is not a matter of grasping a general rule and applying it to particular cases, the activity of a genius can be seen not to be the result of a clear, intellectual and communicable grasp of, say, what is beautiful. For that reason, one cannot *become* a genius, either through study or technical practice: one simply *is* a genius, or one *is not*. That a given person should be a genius, that his work should be the result of such an uncanny power is thus fortuitous and inexplicable: indeed, even the genius himself cannot explain his work. Accordingly, geniuses are often said to be “inspired” (perhaps by a god), rather than “scholarly.” A scholar wills to understand something, and then puts in long hours of study to bring about this understanding, at which point he can communicate this knowledge to others. A genius on the other hand seems not to be in control, but rather to be *subject* to his “passion,” or “inspiration,” which drives him, perhaps involuntarily or even unconsciously, to create. The kind of person we are used to calling a “genius” is thus not very different from his tools: both the painter and his paintbrush are only instruments for the painter’s “inspiration,” which controls the painter, and through him, the paintbrush. The true “genius” in this picture is thus not the painter, any more than it is the paintbrush: rather, it is the powerful force that takes control of him, when “he” creates his art. Thus we should not say “Beethoven was a genius,” but rather “we owe these sublime pieces of music to Beethoven’s genius.”

This sketch puts us in a better position to understand what Hegel means by “genius” in the feeling soul section. By this term Hegel means the element within or outside of a person which controls him. The person under the control of a ‘genius’ is in no position to resist this control since he is often unaware that this ‘genius’ is different

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<sup>14</sup> Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft* 5:306-310.

from his own self (this will become clear when we have a chance to examine some examples). Accordingly, Hegel defines genius as “the *particularity* of a man which, in every case, decides his action and destiny.”<sup>15</sup> This “particularity” is the man’s “fundamental interests, essential and particular empirical relations in which he stands regarding others and the world.”<sup>16</sup>

In other words, a man’s “genius” is that in him which controls his destiny and decisions (his “oracle,”<sup>17</sup> as Hegel calls it) in the same way that an artist’s activity is dominated by his genius. The man’s “genius” is his “feeling totality,”<sup>18</sup> i.e. the sum total of his experiences, temperaments, relations, etc. which make up the “indeterminate pit” which Hegel speaks of in the *Anmerkung* to §403, and which we mentioned above—i.e. the *unconscious*.<sup>19</sup> We used above the example of creative, artistic genius to explain how

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<sup>15</sup> Hegel, *EPW* §405Z p.131.

<sup>16</sup> *EPW* §406A. See also *EPW* §405A, and §406Z p.144.

<sup>17</sup> *EPW* §405Z p.132. See also *VPG* p.37 (as well as *EPW* §392Z pp.56-57) where Hegel contrasts the ancient Greeks and Romans with the people of modernity. The ancients relied on oracles to give them direction regarding what to do in this or that situation. Moderns on the other hand use their own subjectivity to prudently consider all of the circumstances and make their own decision. Of course, the mere feeling soul (whether of a person of the last few centuries or not) is not such a prudent calculator, and only obeys an *internal* oracle where the ancients obeyed an external one. Hegel refers to the ancient use of oracles in the context of his discussion of the universal soul, and the tendency of the individual soul (in its capacity as the actuality of the universal soul) to identify immediately with nature: thus the flight or innards of birds can be taken as a sign of the course one should take. Even when Hector chided Polydamas (who argued that an attempt to capture the Argive ships was inauspicious at the time because a serpent had just escaped the clutches of an eagle flying overhead), repudiating him by saying “Bird signs!/ Fight for your country—that is the best, the only omen!” (*Iliad* XII 280-281), Hector advocated pressing on only because of trust in *another*, prior sign given by Zeus (*Iliad* XII 272-273, 278-279), not because of the strength of his own independent subjectivity. For the universal soul (in the individual soul, its actuality), the whole of (external) nature is its genius, its oracle, just as the “feeling totality” of the individual feeling soul’s inner “indeterminate pit” of feelings is its oracle and genius.

<sup>18</sup> *EPW* §405A.

<sup>19</sup> Thus Hegel defines the genius as “sensation without consciousness [*der bewußtlose Empfindung*]” (*VPG* p.89 note #92). Some have argued that Hegel anticipates Freud in his deduction of this level of spirit (e.g.



Hegel uses the term “genius,” and noted that genius in this sense is often thought of as simply possessed or not possessed (but not acquired in any case). We should not rely too heavily on this example however, since Hegel also understands “genius” to include the unconscious, i.e. the residue of experiences that the soul somehow still possesses, but to which it is not presently attending, and perhaps to which it may have difficult access: for example, mundane details that are experienced, ‘stored away’ as it were, and forgotten, without exclusion of the possibility of their recall at a later time. The experiences that lie obscure in one’s unconsciousness, and which together constitute one’s “genius” for Hegel are certainly *acquired*, unlike artistic genius. However, we can say that in both cases genius is an active force in a person, the arbiter of many of a person’s decisions, but one which is not under the control of the person: either because the person was simply born with this or that “genius” (e.g. creative capacity), or because the “genius” lies inaccessible (or problematically accessible) in (or rather as) the person’s “unconsciousness.” Taking the latter example, we could say that this “feeling totality” or “genius” constitutes the person’s “character,” provided that we also include the caveat that “character” here should not be understood as something deliberately cultivated (as in the case of free spirit<sup>20</sup>), but rather as something acquired haphazardly as a result of the unique combination of experiences that an individual happens to have had. Thus different individuals respond differently to the same circumstances because of their different ‘geniuses.’

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Berthold-Bond and Van der Meulen), as we will see below. (See p.101n for a remark on “deduction” in Hegel).

<sup>20</sup> *EPW* §481.

*How such a displacement of the self (as in a genius) is possible*

That the soul is controlled by its genius means that the soul is susceptible to being controlled by something in some sense outside of it. To be sure, a human being can be subject to external force in many ways which have nothing to do with the feeling soul and its ‘genius’: e.g. insofar as a human is extended, it can be dislodged from its position in space by another extended body, the product of whose mass and acceleration exceeds the product of the mass and acceleration of the human body in question.<sup>21</sup> The chemical composition of the human body can also leave it at the mercy of other chemicals, just as the body’s organic determination (its drives and instincts) can control its behavior. Yet the kind of control we are investigating here is only extrinsically related to the mechanical, chemical, and organic determinations of the human being. The possibility of being dominated by the genius belongs to the soul as such, insofar as it involves (indeed, is constituted by) spirit knowing itself immediately in its feelings.

The genius here can either be the soul’s own unconscious (its “indeterminate pit” of feelings that constitutes its ‘character,’ and the total context of its relationships and worldly concerns),<sup>22</sup> or *another person*. Insofar as this ‘genius’ then controls the passive soul (i.e. the rest of the person or soul, apart from its “genius”) without the slightest resistance (because there is not even so much as a relation between the two), the latter in a very real sense relinquishes its own self, displacing it into its ‘genius.’ We know that the soul is in principle susceptible to such external control because the difference and

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<sup>21</sup> *EPW* §261A.

<sup>22</sup> See the *VPGes* p.38 where Hegel says that “Character [*Charakter*] comprises all inner particularities, the way one behaves in private relationships, etc.”

externality of nature are nothing for the soul<sup>23</sup>: just as the healthy, fully developed soul permeates its entire body (the material separateness of its parts constituting no obstacle for it), so the soul at this primitive stage is able to be extended over bodies that are different spatially, and even biologically.<sup>24</sup> In such a condition, the person is not in possession of its genius: the latter lies rather *outside* of it, in *another* (even if this other is its own unappropriated unconscious).

We have seen in chapter four (and again in the introductory sections to this chapter) this kind of extension of the life of the soul to encompass what is separated from it in a merely natural way. For instance, in the “natural soul” section, we saw how an individual soul can unreflectively take itself to be the soul of all of nature, such that geographical phenomena are reflected in its mood.<sup>25</sup> Thus for the natural soul, the darkness enshrouding the world at night, or the shortened hours of daylight in winter can lead to a morose, somber, i.e. *dark* disposition.

How are we to understand the relation between the natural soul’s unreflective sympathy with all of nature (in the “natural qualities” section), and the feeling soul’s relation to its genius? Why should they be structurally so similar given the wealth of textual material separating them (viz. the ages of life, the sexual relation, sleeping and waking, sensation)? It is clear that the course of the text from the “natural qualities” section to “the feeling soul in its immediacy” involved going from trying to understand

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<sup>23</sup> EPW §389&A.

<sup>24</sup> It is insofar as the feeling soul extends over bodies without regard to difference on any merely natural level (mechanics, chemism, biology), that Van der Meulen characterizes it as the sphere of formal intersubjectivity (“Hegels Lehre von Leib, Seele, und Geist” p.260).

<sup>25</sup> EPW §392&A.

the relation between the diversity of nature on the one hand and the “universal soul” which is the ideality of this diversity (but which has actuality only in individual souls) on the other, to trying to understand the relation between the diverse feelings making up the ‘feeling totality’ on the one hand and the (individual) feeling soul which is the ideality of this diversity (but which has actuality only in individual feelings) on the other. See the Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Comparison of §392 with §§405-406**

<b>(1) Enzyklopädie paragraph(s)</b>	<b>(2) The soul’s determination as ideality to the diversity given in column 4</b>	<b>(3) That in which the soul as universal has actuality</b>	<b>(4) That diversity to which the soul is related immediately</b>	<b>(5) The distortion resulting from this immediacy</b>
§392	The universal soul	Individual souls	The diversity of the natural world	The animalistic sympathy with nature
§§405-406	The feeling soul in its immediacy	Individual feelings	The diversity of the soul’s feeling totality, its particular world	The control of the soul by its genius

Thus one result of the course from §§392-405 is that it has been posited that the individual soul is not only a singular moment of the universal soul, the “soul of the [external] world,”<sup>26</sup> but that it is in fact the universal of *its own* diverse *inner* world (and only in this respect does it really deserve to be called “soul”). In fact, looking back again

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<sup>26</sup> EPW §391.

to the “natural qualities” section, we can see the deeper meaning of the fact that the universal soul (the ideality of *all* of nature) has actuality only in *individual* souls.<sup>27</sup> Recall, there Hegel explained that the soul’s first determination was as “universal soul,” existing indeterminately as the ideality of all of nature, but noted that this universal soul has actuality as spirit (i.e. as a form of self-knowledge) only in individual souls: i.e. nature is only known in its ideality in the unreflective sympathy that individual souls have with the natural world. With the added context of the intervening paragraphs, we can now give a fuller and more precise articulation of what was first expressed as the universal soul having actuality only in individual souls. These intervening paragraphs have shown that each individual soul has its own ‘inner world,’ as its own ‘indeterminate pit’ in which the whole variety of nature is reproduced: i.e. all of nature is reflected ideally in the simplicity of each individual soul. It is for this reason that Hegel calls the feeling soul “monadic”<sup>28</sup>: a monad<sup>29</sup> is at once a part of all of nature,<sup>30</sup> and internally a mirror of nature, reflecting ideally all of the diverse relations of nature.<sup>31</sup> Thus while in the section on the natural soul we were concerned with the individual soul’s relation to the ‘external’ world and the universal soul, in the feeling soul we are concerned with the individual soul’s relation to its own ‘inner’ world. (Of course, we must note here that at this stage the soul has yet to become aware of the difference between inner and outer: it is

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<sup>27</sup> *EPW* §391.

<sup>28</sup> *EPW* §405.

<sup>29</sup> In other words, a “simple substance,” or a “soul”(Leibniz, *La Monadologie*, §19).

<sup>30</sup> Leibniz, *La Monadologie* §3.

<sup>31</sup> Leibniz, *La Monadologie* §56.

only we who are able to see the difference). In both cases, the soul (as the universal ideality of its inner or outer world) has actuality only in its individual moments (either individual souls in the case of the universal soul, or individual feelings in the case of the feeling soul in its immediacy), with which it is identified immediately. Thus the feeling soul up to this point has not resolved the instability that characterized the natural soul: in fact, it has *aggravated* it, reinscribing it in the individual *as such*.

But if the feeling soul identifies immediately with an inner content, then how is it able to have its ‘genius’ *outside* of it, in an *other*? This is possible because the feeling soul does not make the distinction between what is “inner” and what is “outer.” In the second edition of the *Encyclopedia* (1827) Hegel called the feeling soul “the dreaming soul [*die träumende Seele*]”<sup>32</sup>: this makes sense if we recall his account of sleeping in the section on the natural soul. There he says: “We defined sleep as that state which distinguishes itself neither within itself, nor in relation to the external world. This definition [...] is justified by experience. For, when our soul senses or presents itself with always only one and the same thing, it becomes sleepy.”<sup>33</sup> Sleep is thus the condition of the soul in which it fails to distinguish itself from the outer world. Because of this, the soul can identify immediately with something external to it, taking this externality to be its own self (rendering this content equally ‘inner’ and ‘outer’), i.e. relinquishing its selfhood utterly to this externality (viz. its ‘genius’).

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<sup>32</sup> As he also does in the lectures on the philosophy of spirit from 1827/28 (*VPG* p.87).

<sup>33</sup> *EPW* §398Z p.92. See also *VPG* where Hegel defines sleeping as that condition in which “The condition of being divided [viz. waking] is negated, sublated, such that the natural individual, which was divided, is identical with itself”(p.61).

*Examples of the feeling soul in its immediacy from the Haupttext*

Hegel gives three types of this relation to one's 'genius.' The first example is "dreaming [*das Träumen*]." <sup>34</sup> Now, in a certain sense, every shape of the feeling soul is the soul 'dreaming' insofar as it is the soul failing to distinguish inner and outer; yet it turns out that besides dreaming, there are other phenomena that concretize the failure to make this distinction. Thus it could be that Hegel changed the name of this section from "the dreaming soul" to "the feeling soul" in order to avoid the confusion that is caused by naming a genus by one of its species. <sup>35</sup> In any case, we have already acquired some familiarity with the idea of dreaming as precisely this immediate absorption of the soul in its content. Yet we should not think of waking as occupation with the *external* world and of sleeping and dreaming as absorption in one's *internal* world. Instead, we should recall (again, from the discussion of sleeping and waking in the section on the natural soul) that the true distinction between waking consciousness and dreaming is that the soul's contents in its waking life are mediated through each other in an orderly and coherent way, while in dreams this is not the case. <sup>36</sup> Accordingly, in his discussion of dreaming as a form of the feeling soul in its immediacy, Hegel speaks of the individual soul as being loosened from its determinate place in nature, experiencing things impossible to experience in waking life (e.g. phenomena which defy the causal order of nature, natural laws, etc.), and "attaining a profound and powerful feeling of its *total individual* nature,

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<sup>34</sup> *EPW* §405Z p.130.

<sup>35</sup> Moreover, it was probably this terminological change that prompted Hegel finally to explicitly differentiate *Empfindung* from *Gefühl*.

<sup>36</sup> *EPW* §398A. See also *VPG* pp.62-63.

of the *complete context* of its past, present, and future.”<sup>37</sup> The soul’s “genius” here is thus the whole world of its waking experience, disordered and condensed into a point.

The second form is the relation between the unborn child and its mother.<sup>38</sup> The child here is separate from its mother spatially, but this spatial asunderness is nothing for the soul. Hegel was convinced that a pregnant woman was a single self spread over two bodies such that the fetus has its self only in its mother. To be sure, the fetus has no being-for-itself: as we saw in our examination of the ages of life (§396) in the last chapter, the fetus has only a vegetative life, and knows no opposition. Whether the examples Hegel cites in his lectures (of the mother’s emotions being transmitted to her unborn child) are to be believed is less important than his argument that spatial separation is nothing for the soul, and that one human can have its *self* in another. This principle is better illustrated in dreaming, or in the third example, which Hegel calls simply “the relation of the individual to his genius.” Here is where Hegel gives one of the accounts of what “genius” means that we used for the explanation of the term above (viz. that the genius is one’s character, the totality of one’s experiences which shapes one’s decisions and acts—and hence one’s destiny). The relation between the feeling soul and its genius is still better presented however in cases where the genius is another person (though perhaps not in the relation already examined between an unborn child and its mother). Instead, I would like here to present some examples that Hegel does not use, but which I think demonstrate his point rather well.

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<sup>37</sup> *EPW* §405Z p.130.

<sup>38</sup> *EPW* §405A. See also *VPG* pp.89-90.



*Proposed examples of the feeling soul in its immediacy*

Consider for example sympathy pains, or the development of sympathy symptoms (which are empirically verifiable by a third party). It is well documented that sometimes in cases involving two people or more people who are very close emotionally (e.g. a husband and wife), when one is sick or injured, the other will feel his or her pain. Of course, if the illness in question is a communicable disease, then the second person may simply have caught the illness. But such a biological explanation is impossible when considering something like Couvade syndrome.<sup>39</sup> This well-documented phenomenon involves men feeling symptoms of their wives' pregnancies, including food cravings, hormonal shifts, nausea, labor pains, and, in at least one case, "a swollen abdomen resembling that of a fairly advanced pregnancy."<sup>40</sup> Studies of the incidence of Couvade syndrome among men with pregnant wives range from a low 11%<sup>41</sup> or 22%<sup>42</sup> up to 79%.<sup>43</sup> There is also the case of what is called *Folie à deux* (double madness, or *Folie à plusieurs* if more people than two are involved), in which delusions (often paranoid delusions) can be transmitted from one person (the "inducer" or "principal," i.e. *the genius*) to another merely by close emotional association.<sup>44</sup> It has been suggested that

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<sup>39</sup> See Enoch and Ball, *Uncommon Psychiatric Syndromes* pp.95-108.

<sup>40</sup> *Uncommon Psychiatric Syndromes* p.100.

<sup>41</sup> Trethowan, W.H. & Conlon, M.F. "The Couvade Syndrome." p.57.

<sup>42</sup> Lipkin, M. & Lamb, G. "The Couvade Syndrome: an Epidemiologic Study." p.509.

<sup>43</sup> Clinton, J.F. "Physical and Emotional Responses of Expectant Fathers Throughout Pregnancy and the Early Postpartum Period." p.59. See also Munroe, R.L. & Munroe, R.H. "Male Pregnancy Symptoms and Cross-Sex Identity in Three Societies." p.11.

<sup>44</sup> Enoch and Ball, *Uncommon Psychiatric Syndromes* pp.179-206.

cases of mass hysteria, shared religious fanaticism (as for example in murderous or suicidal cults), and St. Vitus's Dance (which Hegel also mentions<sup>45</sup>) are properly cases of *folie à plusieurs*.<sup>46</sup> Phenomena like this are inexplicable for a biologist, i.e. one who considers the human being to be simply a form of organic life: they can only be explained by an account of *the soul*, i.e. of a form of spirit which remains indeterminate with respect to natural (including biological) distinctions.

We can consider also other cases of very close spiritual bonds between people that engender the displacement of the self of one person or the selves of many people into a "genius": for example, the relation between a leader and his followers in a social or political context. Here we have a word for that which makes one person a genius, the self of others who are in his thrall: charisma. To be sure, leadership does not always involve charisma: some men become leaders by soberly making the case for a certain course of action; in such cases however, people consciously follow the policy rather than the man, considering the latter only a more or less effective instrument for accomplishing the end (which alone captivates them). In other cases however, it is the man himself, and not his policies which command a following: such a man exercises a curious control over others, which can appear inexplicable to an outside observer who is not under his sway (as for example in the case of an observer from a different time or place). We should mention that the emotional hold a good orator can have on his listeners is not necessarily perverse. It can be a noble, and indeed socially necessary bond. Yet in some cases (as for example

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<sup>45</sup> Hegel, *EPW* §406Z p.139. St. Vitus' Dance was one of the "dancing plagues" of the middle ages, in which manic, ecstatic dancing in one person would spread to dozens or hundreds.

<sup>46</sup> Enoch and Ball, *Uncommon Psychiatric Syndromes* p.201.

in the case of the leader of a cult, or a demagogue like Hitler or Mussolini) it is certainly perverse; and even when this relation is properly political and more appropriate, it arguably still has its roots in the soul, and hence concerns us here.

For instance, the modern reader may be puzzled when reading about how the Athenians were enchanted by the speeches of Pericles and Demosthenes, or how they were spellbound even by Alcibiades, who more than anyone else led them to ruin. To understand this, one must realize that the power of an orator is not based on the logical cogency of his argument, or the prudence of his suggestions, but rather on his charisma: it is what Hegel called a “*magical relation*,”<sup>47</sup> i.e. an immediate relation that a genius is able to establish between himself and another. This relation does not take place on the level of the abstract understanding, and does not consist in offering propositions in support of a conclusion: it takes place on the level of *the soul*.

The sophists famously claimed to be able to teach this kind of rhetorical sorcery, though it is doubtful (as many at the time recognized) that such a thing can be taught. Admittedly, there do seem to be certain general rules to effective rhetoric, rules which one could teach: alliteration, the stirring use of meter, building up to a phonetic and semantic cadence, etc. Yet these techniques cannot make a person a great leader any more than the similar mechanical application of musical rules can make one a genius composer. The speech of a charismatic leader must resemble what Kant considered the beautiful object: it must be purposive without purpose, i.e. it must strike and appeal to the very heart of one’s audience, without seeming contrived to do so.

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<sup>47</sup> Hegel, *EPW* §405A. This is perhaps an unfortunate phrase to use, as it seems to indicate some occult phenomenon, an implication which is inaccurate.

Indeed, Hegel's description of the hero in his philosophy of objective spirit agrees with this completely: the hero does not think up an abstract constitution and then try to apply it to the world; instead, he in some mysterious sense feels what needs to be done, and brings it about without reflection or total awareness of what it is that he is accomplishing.<sup>48</sup> What makes him a hero (and not, say, a madman) is not so much a property that he possesses in himself, but only that his actions really are in tune with the needs of the time, and that the population as a result does come under his sway, assembling around him and following him, even to their deaths.<sup>49</sup>

I would suggest therefore that the hero, the charismatic national leader, exercises the power of a "genius" over his followers. Indeed, in his lectures on the philosophy of history, Hegel refuses to go too far in discussing the role of the hero in founding a state, or the constitution of a nation before it has been organized (by a hero) into a state, because, he says, such a topic belongs to the *poetry* of history, not its *prose*,<sup>50</sup> i.e. it belongs to mythology rather than history proper (which concerns only the succession of nation-*states*). Just as a state has its origin in the immediate relation established between a charismatic hero and the populace,<sup>51</sup> an association which however *should* go on to develop into a well articulated state<sup>52</sup> (which has no room for such heroes<sup>53</sup>), so the

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<sup>48</sup> *VPGes* p.46. Hegel even calls heroes here "the soul-leaders [*die Seelenführern*]" of their peoples.

<sup>49</sup> For Kant as well, an artist qualifies as a genius only if an audience experiences his work as beautiful.

<sup>50</sup> *VPGes* pp.83-84, 142.

<sup>51</sup> *VPGes* pp.282-283.

<sup>52</sup> *EPW* §549A.

<sup>53</sup> *GPR* §150A.

individual is susceptible to coming under the sway of such a genius, but this is not the normal, developed human condition.<sup>54</sup>

*More examples of the feeling soul in its immediacy from the Haupttext and the lectures*

In discussing this kind of diseased condition in the section on the feeling soul in its immediacy, Hegel has much to say about “magnetic somnambulism” and “animal magnetism.” These include various phenomena, some almost certainly legitimate, some almost certainly illegitimate. Aside from dreaming, and the examples I have provided of sympathetic pain and charisma, other cases that I would be inclined to accept as legitimate include sleep-walking (i.e. somnambulism), hypnotism (which is closely related to sleep (*hypnos*) as its Greek name indicates), and various other mental disorders in which one may have hallucinations amounting to the disruption of the relation between their senses and their proper organs. I am inclined to reject some of the other examples, viz. clairvoyance, and metal and water divination (of which Hegel himself was rather dubious<sup>55</sup>). I am not bothered in opposing Hegel by refusing credence to what he apparently found credible (at least in some instances), because all Hegel really need be committed to is: (1) that the lowest, most abstract level of spirit is the soul; and (2) for the soul natural division is nothing. These positions are not at all incredible. Indeed, it would be foolish to claim otherwise: how else would one explain that a single living, feeling subject is present throughout the whole body? When it comes to admitting other

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<sup>54</sup> We could add that since Hegel does not consider it beneath the dignity of philosophy to take the individual feeling soul as its object, nor should it be beneath the dignity of philosophy to take as its object the pre-political, “mythological” origin of states, the poetry of history.

<sup>55</sup> Thus he recognized that a so-called clairvoyant may simply be deceiving himself about what he sees (*EPW* §406A).

phenomena as concretions of this form of spirit, I would judge each case individually, deferring when appropriate to experts in the relevant fields.<sup>56</sup> Dreams belong to everyone's experience, and thus need no proof. Sleep-walking, hypnotism, and various kinds of hallucination are well-documented and are accepted as legitimate by the American Psychiatric Association. On the contrary, the preponderance of evidence seems to rule against clairvoyance, metal and water divination, etc. Before moving on to the next section, on self-feeling, let us say a few words about hypnotism.

Hypnotism, as its name suggests, is a form of, or at least something resembling sleep (*hypnos*): the collapsing of the distinction for the soul between inner and outer. Hypnosis is best known for its role in treating neuroses. For instance, Freudian psychoanalysis relies on hypnosis for the exploration of the "unconscious": for a patient who displays neurotic symptoms resulting from a past trauma which has been repressed, hypnosis is used to gain access to this repressed content. Hypnosis can be therapeutic only if the patient has such a repressed content that needs to be brought to light. Hypnosis is then effective in inducing the patient's regression to the level of the soul (which under normal circumstances would be undesirable), in order to efface the distinction for the patient between inner and outer, such that the patient will willingly divulge to the therapist the repressed memory he was concealing even from his conscious self. The patient is 'willing' to divulge this content under hypnosis precisely because for the

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<sup>56</sup> That once the two speculative principles given above are accepted the admission of instances as genuine cases of the feeling soul in its immediacy is strictly a matter of *judgment* should prompt us to take the feeling soul section seriously (despite the incredible accounts it contains). Hegel's errors in judgment do not at all besmirch the principles of speculative philosophy. We should also note that Hegel should be forgiven these errors, insofar as his articulation of the principles of speculative philosophy was, I would argue, flawless, and the mistakes he made in judgment are perfectly understandable given the information that was available to him at the time.

patient under hypnosis, nothing is being divulged: in hypnosis the patient loses the distinction between inner and outer; thus, in (what is for the therapist) the *expression* (i.e. externalization) of the repressed memory, the patient recognizes no boundaries (and thus nor does the patient recognize the crossing of a boundary). If, as we said earlier, the genius is the same as the unconscious, then the *expression* of the content that has been repressed to the unconscious would amount to the *liberation* from the control of the genius. For the artist, it is the very creation of his art, the objectification of the content of his unconscious, or genius, that liberates him.<sup>57</sup>

Not only do I propose accepting hypnotism as a form of the feeling soul in its immediacy, I would propose understanding it in a sense broad enough to include phenomena Hegel considers under other names. Accordingly, I propose amending what Hegel says of such phenomena (the details of which are given below), in order to understand them as instances of hypnotism, rather than ostensible forms of the feeling soul in its immediacy whose claim to authenticity we are here rejecting. For instance, Hegel asserts that in “somnambulism” or “animal magnetism,” the passive soul and its genius can share the same feelings.<sup>58</sup> In addition to being possible in cases of Couvade syndrome (discussed above), this sharing of feelings would be possible under hypnosis, at least insofar as the hypnotist would be able to induce certain feelings in the patient through suggestion. Under hypnosis, the patient would be in such a state that there is no distinction between inner and outer: for this reason, a suggestion from the hypnotist is not

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<sup>57</sup> See *EPW* §448Z p.251, where Hegel describes Goethe as doing precisely this in his literary creation.

<sup>58</sup> *EPW* §406A&Z p.150. See also *VPG* p.97.

grasped as coming from *another*, but rather is thought to come from oneself. As a result, the patient can be made to do or to feel what the hypnotist suggests (within certain limits). Not only can the hypnotist thus ‘share’ his feeling with the patient, but also the patient’s private feelings can be ‘shared’ with the hypnotist by the kind of divulging of private contents described above.

Now, in his lectures, Hegel seems to think that it is possible for one person to *immediately intuit* the feelings of another<sup>59</sup>: hypnotism does not allow this, and we would not accept that such a thing is possible. Yet what we have described as being possible through hypnosis still meets Hegel’s own criteria for being concretions of the feeling soul in its immediacy. These criteria do not require the immediate intuition of one person’s feelings by another, but only that the proper mediation of the senses deduced in the section on the natural soul (§§399-402) be bypassed in favor of an ‘immediate’ feeling of the private feelings of another person’s soul. The proper mediation deduced in the section on sensation involves the corporealization of an emotion in one person (e.g. a person’s corporealization of shame through the reddening of the face), and another person’s apprehension of this corporeal manifestation through his own sensation (viz. *sight* of the first person blushing). This is not how a feeling is communicated in hypnosis.

Admittedly, through hypnosis the feelings of one person are transmitted to another through *some* mediation: viz., that of language (the hypnotist’s suggestion to the patient, or the patient’s verbal expression of a repressed content). However, this is not the mediation that was deduced in §§399-402, and so hypnotism *does* constitute a disruption of the proper form of mediation. Of course, feelings are also transmitted via language in

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<sup>59</sup> *VP* p.105.



more commonplace ways (as one person can simply describe an emotion, and perhaps thereby evoke it in another), but this requires the hearer to actively interpret the verbal signs of an emotion, and voluntarily reproduce the emotion in himself. The use of language in such a case would not amount to a disruption of the mediation deduced in §§399-402: sounds known to be *external* are in this case simply heard and interpreted. In hypnotism on the contrary, the hypnotist's suggestion is not sensed as an external sound, and it produces the feeling in the patient without mediation of the understanding or will. Thus there is good reason for holding hypnotism to be a genuine form of the feeling soul in its immediacy, and moreover to interpret Hegel's description of other less credible phenomena to be more properly examples of hypnotism.

Additionally, Hegel finds credible the idea that there could be a "common feeling [*Gemeingefühl*]"<sup>60</sup> i.e. a generalized sensation that operates either through a different organ than the one normally used (such that one sees with one's fingers and tastes through one's abdomen), or through the body generally. I propose that it is possible for hypnotic suggestion (and perhaps also psychosis) to produce such disordered sensations: that is, by such means feelings *for the patient* can be induced, such that, say, chocolate would be tasted at the same time as a chocolate bar is placed on the patient's abdomen. However, there is no reason to believe (and every reason to doubt) that anyone (even in such a hypnotic or psychotic state) could actually be stimulated in this way *by natural objects*, and through *another body part* acting as a sense organ, such that he would be able to tell what an object was merely by placing it on his abdomen and 'tasting' it: the sensation of the taste of chocolate would be in truth produced by the hypnotic suggestion

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<sup>60</sup> *EPW* §406A&Z p.141. See also *VPG* pp.94-95.

(or by his psychosis), not by the chocolate bar; nor would the abdomen be acting as a mediating sense organ. Here I would add the same point as above: the feeling here is mediated through language (in the case of hypnosis), but this phenomena of disordered senses is still possible, and still qualifies as an example of the feeling soul in its immediacy.

Finally, let us turn to a kind of case to which Hegel does not give a general name, but which we might call excessive attachment. Hegel mentions this in the *Anmerkung* to §406, but it is the kind of manifestation of madness that we will treat more extensively in our discussion of self-feeling. In this phenomenon, the soul identifies immediately with a certain limited, contingent content: e.g. a certain person or a certain place—or more properly speaking, the *feeling* the soul has regarding this person or place. Because of this immediate identification, the soul can suffer a terrible trauma when deprived of this feeling (since, for the soul, this feeling is its own self, and in such a deprivation the soul suffers the loss of its own self). As examples, Hegel gives the grief one can suffer as a result of the death of a loved one, the suicidal grief that Cato (the younger) felt when faced with the collapse of the Roman republic,<sup>61</sup> as well as homesickness generally.<sup>62</sup> This is a case of the feeling soul in its immediacy, insofar as the soul here does not distinguish itself from what is for us<sup>63</sup> only its content; but by this same token (viz. the

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<sup>61</sup> See *Plutarch's Lives* vol. VIII p.403.

<sup>62</sup> Hegel, *EPW* §406A. See also Hegel's remark that an Italian woman can become so absorbed in a love affair, that when it ends badly she can die "in a single instant" (*EPW* §394Z p.66).

<sup>63</sup> See p.71n for a remark on the use of the locution "for us."

lack of distinction for the soul between its content and itself) this is a case of self-feeling (*Selbstgefühl*).

### Self-feeling

#### *Introductory remarks*

It would seem from the section headings (viz. “the feeling soul in its immediacy” and “self-feeling”) that the difference between these two forms of the soul must involve the latter being mediated in some way. By “mediated” we mean that the soul (as a “universal” with several feelings) is identified with each singular (feeling), but not *simpliciter*: rather, the ‘universal’ is identified with a ‘singular’ only through a ‘particular.’ We saw in the section on sensation how the soul was ‘mediated’ with respect to its sensations through its senses: thus the soul (the ‘universal’) senses a certain measure of heat (a ‘singular’ sensation) through the sense of touch and its organ (the skin and its nerves). It is this mediation through a determinate sense and a corporeal sense organ that allows the soul to distinguish itself from any given sensation: recall, corporeal sense organs passively bear certain natural determinations, as the skin passively bears a certain measure of heat. But because the skin already has a certain temperature, it is *insensible* to precisely that temperature: thus the sensing soul senses only what varies from its own determinations, and knows its singular sensations as distinct from itself in its universality. Thus as we saw in chapter four, the sensing soul ‘maintains its universality’ in the face of its sensations, always knowing itself as distinct from what it knows to be a determinate sensation.

In contrast, as we saw in the first part of this chapter, feeling first appears as an *immediate* relation between the soul and its content: this *lack* of a mediation between the soul and its content is the result of the circumvention of the senses and the sense organs (which were the mediating particular in sensation) that characterizes feeling. To be sure, although the feeling soul experiences its content in an immediate way and hence is unable to distinguish itself from that content, we are able in our analysis of the feeling soul to distinguish the feeling soul from what we know to be its content. Indeed, it is only *because* this distinction is clear for us<sup>64</sup> that we were able to see the feeling soul in its immediacy as a disruption of the sensible mediation the soul attained at the end of the section on the natural soul, i.e. that we are able to see that the distinction between universal and particular is *not* clear for the soul at that stage.

We said above that the transition from “the feeling soul in its immediacy” to “self-feeling” would seem to involve the introduction of some form of mediation (at least this is what the section titles seem to indicate). However, we should not fail to see that self-feeling is still in some sense an immediate relation (of the soul and its content) insofar as the soul in self-feeling simply takes itself to be (what we know as) its content, i.e. the soul here is ‘immediately’ related to its content. How then, is “self-feeling” different from “the feeling soul in its immediacy”? They differ insofar as in self-feeling the soul knows itself (in its content) as something *particular* and as a result feels (without understanding) a certain incongruity between itself (as universal) and its (singular) content—an incongruity of which the soul as sensation is totally unaware, precisely because it is mixed with its body and hence senses only *other* things but never *itself*, and

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<sup>64</sup> See p.71n for a remark on the use of the locution “for us.”

thus never knows itself as something particular. That the soul feels this incongruity is clear for us (as we will see in this section) in the desperation with which the soul in self-feeling clings to its feeling. That such desperation is *felt at all* indicates that a minimal separation between the soul and its content has been achieved (since without this separation the soul would have no inkling that it—i.e. its content—is particular at all, and nor would it feel the resulting discomfort). It is because of the achievement of this minimal separation between the soul and its particular feeling that we may distinguish self-feeling from the feeling soul in its immediacy.

This is all rather complicated, so we will be well served by articulating again how sensation, the feeling soul in its immediacy, and self-feeling differ from each other. Sensation involves the soul relating to its content (i.e. its sensations) by mediation of its senses and the body in which these senses inhere: i.e. the soul (as a universal) is able to have a (singular) sensation because the soul is itself immanently determined into the (particular) senses of physical ideality (sight and hearing), real difference (smell and taste), and concrete totality (touch). Thus by §402 we have a well articulated picture of how the soul (which is one) relates to the natural world (which is manifold). However, though the senses mediate between the soul and certain natural phenomena (light, sound, odors, tastes, weight, heat, etc.), they do not mediate between the already received sensations (i.e. the feelings) and the soul: these feelings simply exist ‘in’ the soul, gathered together in the one common “indeterminate pit.”<sup>65</sup> That this “pit” is “indeterminate” means that as *inner* content, the feeling is not mediated by the senses deduced in the *Anmerkung* to §401. That is, there has been deduced no other way for the

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<sup>65</sup> EPW §403A.

soul to relate to these feelings except *immediately*: this is what occurs when for example a long-forgotten content (a feeling buried deep within the “indeterminate pit”) is inexplicably brought to the surface (as when someone in the grip of sickness spontaneously speaks in a language long-forgotten,<sup>66</sup> or recites a story or poem heard only once long ago<sup>67</sup>). In such cases the mediation deduced in sensation (viz. the five senses) is bypassed, and a content emerges in a way that appears ‘magical’ if we consider the natural order to be defined strictly in terms of such sensible mediation.

However, though at this stage there is not, there *ought* to be some mediating particular that regulates the relation between the soul (as universal) and these singular inner contents in the same way that the senses regulate the relation between the soul and its outer contents: this mediating particular will be posited as *habit* in §409. Before habit is posited however, we have the section on self-feeling. Though in the last section (viz. the feeling soul in its immediacy) there appeared to be an *immediate* relation between the soul and its content, in self-feeling it is posited that the soul is in truth related to its own self *in its particularity*, i.e. the soul (as a universal) *feels* its own self (in its singular feeling). The difference between the two sections is subtle but important: in both its immediacy and as self-feeling, the feeling soul identifies with its content, taking this content to be itself; yet in self-feeling, the soul knows this content (and hence itself) to be something *particular*, i.e. something *felt*.

Clearly, in its immediacy the feeling soul is subject to many problems: its experience of the world is disordered as a result of its withdrawal from the body and its

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<sup>66</sup> *VPG* p.88.

<sup>67</sup> *EPW* §406Z pp.144-145.

senses; it has in some cases relinquished the control of itself to another, i.e. to its 'genius.' Hegel does not in "self-feeling" introduce the nuances that will make possible the correction of these distortions. Rather, self-feeling is an aggravation of the aberrant state first seen in the feeling soul in its immediacy. However, this aggravation brings closer the feeling soul's resolution, i.e. the resolution of the immediate relation between the soul and its feelings. It is only in habit that the problems that characterize the feeling soul will be resolved by the introduction of a form of mediation for the soul's feelings, its inner contents. A form of mediation for the soul's externally received contents was of course already deduced in §402: this mediation is provided by the senses. However, the anthropology cannot conclude at §402 (after the sensation section), with the senses posited as the mediating particular, because at §402 the distinction between inner and outer has not yet been posited for the soul. Because this distinction has not been posited, it is not yet clear that sensation has only *partially* mediated the relation between the soul and its content: sensation mediates between the soul and external, natural contents, but not between the soul and its internal feelings. Thus the soul is initially related to the latter *immediately*, and is hence subject to all kinds of distortions and aberrations. In self-feeling it is posited that there is some disparity between the soul and its feeling, insofar as the feeling is *particular*, and hence is in a certain sense incongruous with the soul as such.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> To be sure, the soul's particularity is real, but the soul is not *merely* particular. Feeling generally constitutes an advance on sensation because in sensation: (1) the soul was mixed with its body, and consequently passively possessed certain *particular* determinations (e.g. having its skin at a certain temperature); (2) the soul (because of this mixing) sensed only what *varied* from its own unacknowledged particularity—thus the sensing soul knew itself as universal (in distinction from the particular determinations which it sensed), but was ignorant of its own latent particularity. Feeling on the other hand bypasses the mediation of the senses, and thus feels itself in particular contents from which it is (because of

Our understanding of what Hegel means by self-feeling can be further augmented by reference to what he says about “feeling [*Gefühl*]” in his lectures on the philosophy of religion. There he makes it clear that *all* feeling is—at least implicitly—self-feeling: “This is what feeling is: the place where my being and the being of my object [i.e. what is felt] exist as one. Here my being and the being [of the object] are posited as one”<sup>69</sup>; “‘having [some content] in feeling’ is nothing other than having it as mine, and indeed mine as this particular individual—that it belongs to me, that it is for me, that I have and know it in its determinacy, and equally have and know myself in this determinacy. It is feeling of a content, and equally self-feeling. The content is such that my particularity is bound up with it.”<sup>70</sup> It appears therefore that if it was not until 1830 that Hegel differentiated between *Empfindung* and *Gefühl*,<sup>71</sup> he still had worked out an understanding of *Gefühl* as early as 1824, and until his death this understanding remained basically consistent (including with the text and lectures of the anthropology).

What the lectures on the philosophy of religion contribute to our understanding of feeling is thus that in feeling something, one is also feeling oneself. If we are talking about a religious feeling (as Hegel of course is in the lectures on the philosophy of religion), then this means that whenever I have a feeling of God, I am not simply

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this immediacy) unable to distinguish itself—i.e. the feeling soul knows itself as particular—but equally because of this absorption the feeling soul cannot recognize that it is not simply identical with its feeling, that it is (as a *universal*) equally associated with *other*, *opposite* feelings.

<sup>69</sup> *VPR* (1824) pp.175-176. The same idea appears almost verbatim in the 1831 lectures (*VPR* (1831) pp.123-124).

<sup>70</sup> *VPR* (1827) pp.285-286.

<sup>71</sup> As DeVries says (*Hegel's Theory of Mental Activity* p.71), and as is suggested by the change of the section's title from “the dreaming soul” to “the feeling soul” in 1830.



apprehending God, but always also enjoying my own particularity (i.e. I am feeling God *in God's relation to me*, as a particular empirical individual<sup>72</sup>). Additionally, we can learn that feeling *as such* for Hegel has as a defining characteristic that *consciousness* (which *represents* the felt object as something objective and distinct from the subjective sensation) is not operative.<sup>73</sup> We should not therefore take self-feeling to be a relation between a feeling subject and a *represented* felt self, mediated by consciousness. Instead, self-feeling is simply feeling where it is posited for us that in feeling a determinate object, the subject itself is determined and felt. To be sure, in sensation there was something like self-feeling: viz., the corporealization of the emotions, in which determinations of spirit which are in themselves incorporeal (e.g. anger) can be *felt* (as a burning in the chest).<sup>74</sup> Yet self-feeling is different insofar as sensations which we know to have originated in experience with external objects are in self-feeling identified with the soul itself: thus any such feeling whatsoever can be invested with the significance of the soul's own self. This condition (unlike the corporealization of the emotions) is the sickness of the soul, i.e. madness.

#### *Self-feeling as sickness of the soul*

According to Hegel, self-feeling is madness, sickness of the soul. Accordingly, there are important parallels with the other kind of sickness, viz. sickness of the

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<sup>72</sup> *VPR* (1831) p.124.

<sup>73</sup> *VPR* (1824) pp.182-183. He also says this in the 1827 lectures (*VPR* (1827) pp.287-288) and in the 1831 lectures (*VPR* (1831) p.135), though he there says "I" instead of "consciousness." Of course, *das Ich* and *das Bewußtsein* are one and the same (*EPW* §§412, 413).

<sup>74</sup> *EPW* §401A. Indeed, Halbig likens the corporealization of the emotions in the section on sensation to religious feeling: as the soul in sensation realizes an emotion corporeally and therein *feels* its own emotion, so the absolute realizes itself in the world of objective spirit (see chapter three for a review of this), and in religion *feels itself* in the state, its own objectification of itself (*Objektives Denken*, p.100).

organism. It will be instructive to examine these parallels. The organism, the living being (recalling our discussion of it in chapter one) should not be thought of as simply an extended body operating mechanically like a machine. Even a *chemical* is more than an extended body exhausted by mechanical determinations. A living being should instead be understood as a complex of assimilative processes which, far from being simply material, are actually the *destruction* of matter: in their operation these processes take in matter and transform it into energy for the continuation of precisely these assimilative processes, evacuating the rest as waste.<sup>75</sup> The very presence of this waste, as enduring, unassimilated corporeity, is a sign that natural life is subject to *disease* and *death*. Disease for Hegel occurs when one part of the living being (this or that organ or process) begins to operate independently of the whole, thereby subverting the self-reproductive activity of the whole.<sup>76</sup> In natural life, it is the aforementioned inability of the organism to assimilate nature completely that precipitates its disease and the death.<sup>77</sup>

Likewise, insanity is a sickness of the soul, such that the relation between the sphere of the soul (*das Seelenhafte*) and the “*objective* consciousness” (the more developed spiritual capacities whose deduction follows the anthropology) is one of “*direct opposition*.”<sup>78</sup> That is, in insanity the sphere of the soul, or the soul-like element (*das Seelenhafte*) begins to operate independently of the rest of spirit just as for the animal, disease involves one organ system operating at variance with the rest of the

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<sup>75</sup> EPW §365A&Z pp.489-492.

<sup>76</sup> EPW §371.

<sup>77</sup> EPW §§375-376.

<sup>78</sup> EPW §408Z p.164.

animal's organic functions. Similarly, just as organic disease is provoked by the failure to completely digest inorganic nature, the sickness of the soul is prompted by the "moment of corporeity" which has not been fully assimilated by spirit:

Because self-feeling is still determined *immediately*, i.e. because of the moment of corporeity that is still undetached from spirit, and because the feeling also is itself something particular [*ein besonderes*] (here, with a particular [*partikuläre*] corporealization), it follows that though the subject has developed to the point of intellectual consciousness [*verständigen Bewußtsein*], it is still susceptible to *disease*, remaining as it does in a *particularity* [*Besonderheit*] of self-feeling which it can neither overcome nor assimilate to its ideality.<sup>79</sup>

It is clear then that there are many structural similarities in Hegel's account between the disease of the living body and the disease of the soul. To understand the disease that is self-feeling, we must understand what the unassimilated "moment of corporeity" is (quoted above). To understand this, let us recall a key feature of sensation: viz. that as sensation the soul is "mixed" with the body (see the discussion of this in chapter four). As "mixed," the sensitive soul is in a sense corporeal, natural: i.e. the soul passively has certain sensible determinations in the way natural objects do. For example, the sensitive soul is (since it is a human individual) covered with skin; and this skin, like everything material is necessarily a certain temperature. That is, this skin passively possesses a certain measure of heat. But by *being* this determinate measure of heat (i.e. as a result of this 'mixing' with corporeity), the sensitive soul becomes incapable of *sensing* precisely that determination: thus other objects which possess the same measure of heat are likewise not felt at all by the sensitive soul (at least not with respect to their temperature). In other words, the sensitive soul is 'mixed' with a body, and whatever

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<sup>79</sup> *EPW* §408. See also Hegel's lectures: "In illness, that which is not under the control of our conscious actuality emerges" (*VP* p.109).

determinations the sensitive soul has (in the natural, corporeal sense of merely passively possessing it), it does not sense; therefore the sensitive soul senses what varies from its own particular, determinate condition, but it never senses or feels *itself*, and indeed is unaware that it is particular and corporeal in this way (i.e. the sensing soul knows itself as universal, but not as particular, as we said above). The “moment of corporeity that is still undetached from spirit” is thus the soul’s own body,<sup>80</sup> i.e. that which mediates between the soul and its content. It is only when the soul manages to detach itself (at least minimally) from this corporeal moment (i.e. its own body) that the soul begins to *feel itself*; but in thus circumventing the body and its forms of mediation, the soul leaves this ‘corporeal moment’ unassimilated—i.e. the soul has not provided a more adequate form of mediation in the place of the body and its sense-organs. As we will see when we reach the discussion of habit and actual soul, the significance of “the body” here and “the unassimilated corporeal moment” is simply *that of the mediator between the soul and its sensation/feeling*. The task of the soul is to lose, or detach itself from the body given to it by nature, and to fashion its own ‘body’ (i.e. form of mediation) for itself.

We must make clear that we are of course not talking about the soul “detaching itself” from its body *absolutely*: we mean only that in order to feel itself the soul must bypass its corporeal sense organs (the form of mediation belonging to its body, and given by nature), making itself into its own object, identifying something which it knows as particular to be its own self. Thus the feeling soul in its immediacy circumvents the senses and feels its content immediately. We saw in chapter two that this kind of self-

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<sup>80</sup> “As self-feeling, we are identical with our corporeity” (*VP* p.109).

particularization belongs to the concept of spirit. It also belongs to the concept of spirit however (as we further saw in chapter two) for spirit to know this particularity as a determination of itself (as universal): this should not be done in such a way that spirit holds any contingency whatsoever of its self-objectification to be simply identical with its (spirit's) own self, but this is precisely what the feeling soul does (hence it is precisely in this sense that the feeling soul falls short of its concept, and is *false*<sup>81</sup>). The feeling soul has many feelings, and it lives in some sense in each of them; yet it cannot be identified with any of them in their immediacy, because each feeling in its immediacy is contingent and excludes other feelings, yet the soul is involved in the *totality* of its feelings, not with one only.

We called attention earlier to a parallel between the feeling soul and the universal or world soul from the natural qualities section (see the Table 1 above). Just as the universal soul is present throughout nature, in *all* individual souls and not only in one to the exclusion of the others, so the feeling soul is present in all of its feelings and not in one only to the exclusion of the others. Hegel does not pursue this point in the natural qualities section (or indeed, anywhere else), but we could say that just as the immediate relation between the feeling soul and each of its feelings allows for madness, an aberrant state in which one feeling lays claim to the feeling soul as such, to the exclusion of all other feelings, so the sympathy with nature that Hegel describes in §392 is an aberrant state in which a single individual soul takes itself to be the universal soul *simpliciter*, seeing all of nature as an expression of its own inner condition. Or, madness can be

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<sup>81</sup> Hegel defines truth as agreement between concept and existence, and falsity as the disparity between the two (*EPW* §213A).

likened to one race or nation (the particular terms given in §§393-394) which takes all of nature to be the expression of its own particular spirit: e.g. what for one nation might be a meaningless event, for another is an oracular sign of the favor of the gods for *its* nation to the exclusion of others; or two opposing nations each might interpret a natural event as an oracular sign of *their* nation's right to dominate the other. The same ontological configuration of the terms of the concept which in the feeling soul is an individual's madness, would then in a nation be *chauvinism*: a deformity to which each nation is subject, but which does not agree with its concept, being rather a kind of *collective madness*.

Returning to the case of the individual feeling soul, because there is no mediating particular term between the soul and its feelings, each feeling clamors for the attention of the soul, which feels compelled to identify *simpliciter* with each feeling singly. It is not only that the soul is torn between conflicting feelings: the soul has no power over any of its feelings, but instead is controlled by them. That is, the soul is not the substance that has its feelings as its accidents; rather, the feeling (*each* feeling) is the substance, and the soul is its accident.<sup>82</sup> The soul thus recognizes its feeling as something particular, and in taking this feeling to be its own self, recognizes its own particularity; but in identifying with any given feeling *simpliciter*, it fails to recognize that it is not *limited* to this

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<sup>82</sup> "The soul is always the subject in this judgment (*Urteile*), its object is its *substance*, which is at the same time its predicate. This substance is not the content of its natural life, but rather the content of the individual soul filled with sensation" (*Enzyklopädie* (1830) §404). This quote does not belong to the section on self-feeling in particular, but it comes from the introductory paragraphs to the feeling soul section generally, so it is applicable. Wallace and Miller have mistranslated this passage by reading *noch* for *nicht*. Thus they render the second sentence quoted above in the following way: "This substance is still [!!] the content of its natural life"—as a result of this error, they must introduce the following locution into Hegel's text (indicated in italics): "[...] but *turned into* the content of the individual sensation-laden soul."

particular feeling. Thus it is perhaps false, but at least misleading, to say that in self-feeling the soul knows itself as particular: the soul here identifies with a particular feeling, but it fails to grasp precisely *how* it is particular, and thus identifies completely with any and all feelings, no matter how contingent or mutually incompatible.

Hans-Christian Lucas has made the interesting observation that the logical basis for Hegel's understanding of the sickness of the soul must be in the quality section of the doctrine of being.<sup>83</sup> Lucas makes much of a certain *Zusatz* in which Hegel says that quality is a determinacy that is identical with being: if something is defined by its quality, then its loss of this quality entails the loss of the thing itself.<sup>84</sup> Thus Hegel says, quality is a determination that belongs to nature rather than spirit; or, we might say in light of what we understand the feeling soul to be, quality pertains to nature and to spirit in its immediacy. Lucas' thesis that self-feeling is a concretion of "quality" is plausible insofar as madness does involve the soul's identification with a determinate particular content, and the resulting instability (such that with the loss of this content the soul would lose itself). Let us examine how this is so.

### *Madness*

Hegel deduces three types of madness (the first being further subdivided into three kinds): (1) the spirit sunken into itself, which can either be (1a) idiocy (simple self-absorption in a state of spiritual paralysis),<sup>85</sup> (1b) distraction (inability to attend to the

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<sup>83</sup> "'Die ,souveräne Undankbarkeit' des Geistes gegenüber der Natur" pp.284-285.

<sup>84</sup> *EPW* §90Z

<sup>85</sup> *VP* p.114. See also *EPW* §408Z pp.172-173.

immediately present),<sup>86</sup> or (1c) rambling (the inability to attend to anything at all, inability to hold one's representations together)<sup>87</sup>; (2) madness proper (in which the indeterminate self-absorption of the first type acquires a definite content, on which the soul then fixates, according to its objective reality)<sup>88</sup>; (3) mania or frenzy (where the soul becomes aware of the disruption of itself, but cannot rid itself of its fixation).<sup>89</sup>

We will not go through each of these in detail. We will merely point out first that these three moments give madness in its concept, and in its properly conceptual articulation: the absorption within oneself in abstraction from determinacy (idiocy, distraction, and rambling); the fixation on a particular content, which implies some minimal differentiation (madness proper); the soul's awareness that it is internally divided, that it is diseased, though it has yet to assert control over its complex of feelings overcoming this difference (mania or frenzy). In what follows we will focus on madness proper (*eigentliche Narrheit*): in fact, in describing self-feeling and madness thus far, we have been describing it as madness proper.

Madness, as we said, involves the soul becoming totally absorbed in a particular feeling, identifying with it completely (feeling *itself* in this feeling). Such absorption is *possible* only because in feeling the normal mediation between the soul and its contents deduced in sensation has been set aside: as we saw in the feeling soul in its immediacy, feeling is characterized by an immediate relation between the soul and its feeling. For

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<sup>86</sup> *VP*G p.115. See also *EPW* §408Z p.173.

<sup>87</sup> *VP*G p.115. See also *EPW* §408Z p.174.

<sup>88</sup> *VP*G pp.115-117. See also *EPW* §408Z pp.174-175.

<sup>89</sup> *VP*G pp.117-118. See also *EPW* §408Z pp.176-177.



example, in hypnotism, the soul can be made to feel certain things without mediation of its sense organs. Moreover, bypassing the mediation of sense organs means also avoiding the limitations of sensation (viz. that the soul senses what differs from its determinations, but does not sense *itself*). For this reason it can be said that all feeling is (at least implicitly) *self-feeling*,<sup>90</sup> i.e. that the soul enjoys *its own* particularity in its feeling (i.e. this content, which as a mere sensation could be sensed by anyone, is as a matter of fact *mine*, and I feel it *as mine*).

Madness thus seems to be a form of the phenomenon which we earlier called “excessive attachment,” which Hegel first introduces in the *Anmerkung* to §406 (still in the section on the feeling soul in its immediacy). The soul here identifies with (what we know to be) a limited, contingent feeling, which because of its limitation and contingency cannot be stably identified immediately with the soul. The healthy, “self-possessed [*besonnen*]” subject on the other hand is able to order all of its feelings into a coherent whole, qualifying its identification with each in accordance with the organizing principle of this whole.<sup>91</sup> This ‘self-possessed’ subject is not the sensing soul with its mediated relation to the sensible determinations of natural objects (a mediation that is itself given by nature), but rather the more developed soul (in the deduction of which we are currently engaged) which has itself fashioned its own mediated relation to its inner feelings. The madman fails to do this precisely because he lacks such an organizing principle, i.e. a way to mediate his feelings.

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<sup>90</sup> *VPR* (1827) pp.285-286.

<sup>91</sup> *EPW* §408A.

As an example let us take a madman with an unhealthy fixation on a woman.

This fixation is an illness because the madman is completely absorbed in his relationship with this woman.<sup>92</sup> This obsession disrupts the man's family life, friendships, and work. The feeling cannot be integrated into the rest of his life, the other relationships he must maintain. Yet, it would be foolish for this man's friends to exhort him to abandon or even temper his obsession with this woman: this exhortation would belie a failure to understand the structure of self-feeling. In self-feeling the self feels itself in its feeling. The feeling is not an object for the soul, it is a mode in which the soul *is*. To implore the madman to abandon the object of his fixation in the name of 'being reasonable' is therefore clearly a hopeless endeavor: nothing could be more unreasonable for the sick soul. The healthy person who fails to grasp the structure of self-feeling may see the sick man's obsession as one aspect of his life, a particularly harmful one that should be curbed or eradicated; but to the sick man, the object of his obsession is quite literally his entire life. The rest of his life and the world are for him only a distraction.

A political analogue may be helpful. In a nation, each member of the nation is in some sense the nation itself, immediately existing: each can speak for the nation, act on behalf of the nation, exercise the authority of the nation.<sup>93</sup> The nation here is 'universal' (in the sense that it includes many singulars and communes only with itself) though each

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<sup>92</sup> We said above that in madness the madman 'accords objective reality' to his fixed idea. This does not imply however that the object of a mad fixation must not exist, but only that it does not exist as the madman think it does. The object of the madman's obsession in this example can thus be a real woman, but perhaps one who does not share the madman's devotion, or have the qualities he attributes to her.

<sup>93</sup> At least this is how the classically liberal state (or what we today would call the libertarian state) is organized: in Locke's view, each *individual* has the inherent right to execute the laws of natural right (*Second Treatise of Government* §7).

member is only a determinate, contingent singular (which *is not*, at least in some sense, the other singulars). If the universal and the singular are identified *immediately*, then each member of the nation arrogates to himself the *sole* right to represent the whole nation: but the singular citizen obviously has limitations, contingencies (e.g. particular interests at variance with those of other citizens), and inadequacies that the nation as such (as universal) does not have. As a result, the immediate identification of universal and singular is unstable. Thus during the Terror of the early 1790s, each citizen identified himself immediately with the nation: consequently, any difference between one citizen and another was held by each to be treason against the nation itself, and the ‘traitor’ was put to death.<sup>94</sup>

What is needed are institutions that are particular, and differentiate the nation (as universal) from itself, but do so according to a principle immanent in the nation itself: then a difference in opinion between two singular citizens does not necessitate the destruction of the nation (in the person of one citizen) in order to preserve it (in the person of another). Instead, each citizen would be identified with the nation only in a qualified way; and there would be a clearly defined rationale for determining the extent to which a given citizen acts within the law. In other words, in a case of the universal and singular relating immediately, what is needed is a mediating particular. For a nation, this mediating role is filled by its customs (*Sitten*), which are the social *habits* of a people<sup>95</sup>:

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<sup>94</sup> *PG* pp.386-389. Another political analogue would be the kind of national chauvinism that we described above, in which each nation (each particular form of the universal) takes itself to be the universal soul *simpliciter*, denying other nations any legitimacy whatsoever.

<sup>95</sup> *GPR* §151. Patriotism too, the disposition to trust the state, is called *habitual* for the citizen (*GPR* §268). Barbara Merker traces the reappearance of habit in later parts of the *EPW* and *GPR* in „Über Gewohnheit“ (pp.233-243).

these may be formally expressed in laws which mediate between individual citizens, qualifying the claim of each to represent the nation in accordance with the degree to which his actions are informed by the national customs. Here, in the feeling soul, as we mentioned, the particular term that mediates between the soul and its feelings is the *habit* (*Gewohnheit*) of the individual: habit is a particularizing principle immanent within the soul, which qualifies the soul's identification with each singular feeling to the extent required for all feelings to be integrated together as a totality.

### Habit

#### *Habit as a cure for madness*

But is not habit the process of becoming accustomed to something previously alien, e.g. an *unfamiliar* feeling? If so, then its succession of self-feeling appears nonsensical. After all, is self-feeling not characterized by the soul's complete absorption in feeling? Does the soul not commune with its very self in its feeling? In self-feeling the soul is involved too much, not too little in its feeling: indeed, the soul is terrified of the loss of this feeling, as this would be the loss of the soul's own self. The lunatic holds fast to his fixed idea even as the rest of his life falls apart around him. However, illness brings with it the possibility of its supersession, insofar as insanity involves the soul identifying completely with what is essentially contingent, transient, and will almost certainly be lost. In the experience of this loss, habit is cultivated.

Thus since the feeling is contingent and its object or satisfaction is easily lost, we can see the *negation* of the fixed idea, its *absence* as that experience to which the soul must become habituated. To put it differently, therapy requires the soul to identify with or

feel itself in that which is *negative* in a feeling (its limitations, contingency) as well as that in the feeling which is positive. Madness is therefore not merely the soul's morbid absorption in a singular feeling, but also as the soul's utter lack of acquaintance with the limitations or absence of this feeling. The singularity of the fixed idea, its determinacy, entails its relation to its opposite, the absence of such a feeling. As the soul endures this loss it overcomes illness.<sup>96</sup> What makes self-feeling a susceptibility to illness is the determinacy of this feeling (and its consequent incompatibility in a sense with the soul, its inability to be immediately identified with the soul in a stable way); yet this determinacy also makes the cure in habituation possible. Thus habit succeeds self-feeling: habit grows out of self-feeling naturally, while still solving the problem of insanity.

To make this more clear, we may turn to an analogy Hegel gives: the habituated soul is to its individual feelings as the pure intuition of space itself or time itself is to particular spaces or particular times.<sup>97</sup> This makes sense if we consider that any particular space is indeed *space*; but no particular space is space itself *simpliciter*: each particular space is limited on all sides by *other* spaces, which the first space *is not*, but which are equally spaces in their own right. Likewise, each particular feeling has a claim on the soul (the soul does feel itself in each feeling); but no feeling is the soul *simpliciter*: each particular feeling is limited by other feelings which it excludes, but which have an equal

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<sup>96</sup> Thus no insanity is incurable aside from what Erdmann records as “idiocy as such [*der Blödsinn überhaupt*]” (*VPG* p.114) and Boumann has recorded as “*natural* idiocy [*natürlichen Blödsinn*]” (*EPW* §408Z p.172). From Hegel's descriptions, this seems to be what we would today call mental retardation, and which is incurable because it stems from *physiological* causes.

<sup>97</sup> *EPW* §409A.

claim on the soul. In habit, the soul identifies with the totality of its feelings, taking each as limited.

To cure madness, Hegel advocates cultivating in the madman feelings that the actual world, its relationships and obligations, have value, and are not just an impediment to his (perhaps unrealizable) obsession.<sup>98</sup> An alternate treatment still in keeping with Hegel's understanding of illness and habit as its cure would be that illness is overcome by the experience of the loss of the feeling with which the soul identifies in self-feeling (i.e. the experience of the loss of self).<sup>99</sup> The initial experience of this loss may plunge the madman into the darkest despair. However, that this loss of the self is *experienced* indicates that the self has somehow endured (as that which experiences the loss). The loss of self is integral to habit because this loss is the experience of the *limitations* of the singular feeling (that in it in virtue of which it may not be simply identified with the soul). This limitation is phenomenally revealed in the trauma of the perishing of the singular feeling with which the soul was identified. By "the perishing of the feeling" I mean the bitter frustration and disappointment of the soul which loses that feeling with which it identified. The very cry of despair can reveal this to the sick man: "I have lost myself." This statement shows that which has been lost to be an object, "myself," which is different from that which has lost it, "I." Of course I am not claiming that the structure

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<sup>98</sup> *VPG* p.120. See also *EPW* §408Z p.179.

<sup>99</sup> It could be that the cultivation of an appreciation for the value of the actual world and its conditions would be easier on the patient and preferable to that extent; however, my purpose is not actually to promote any change in clinical practice, but only to elucidate Hegel's account of illness and what habit does to overcome it.

of language makes insanity curable, but only that this cry of despair can indicate to the sick person that his suffering of infinite pain is already his transcendence of it.<sup>100</sup>

One way that this trauma could be induced (and which Hegel describes) is for the person administering the madman's treatment to enter into his delusion<sup>101</sup> ("*in ihre Einfälle [or Vorstellung, Verdrehtheit] einzugehen*"). Thus Hegel gives the example of a madman who claimed to be the Holy Spirit: to cure him, another simply had to enter into his delusion (viz., that any person whatsoever can simply be the Holy Spirit), saying "How can you be the Holy Spirit? *I* am it."<sup>102</sup> This technique demonstrates to the madman the absurdity of his delusion by bringing it into open contradiction with itself: thus while the belief that any individual whatsoever can be the Holy Spirit can in some sense justify the madman's contention that he is himself the Holy Spirit, it can just as easily justify the *opposite* contention (that he *is not*, because *another* person is). Therefore it is possible to cure someone of madness simply through dialectic. Indeed, this is precisely what Socrates does to his interlocutors in Plato's dialogues: when Polemarchus claims that justice is helping one's friends and harming one's enemies,<sup>103</sup> Socrates does not present an opposing position. Instead, Socrates simply enters into

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<sup>100</sup> Hegel often notes how the bare expression of a problem can point to its solution: "Nothing is known, or even felt as a *limit* or lack until one is above and *beyond* it" (*EPW* §6*A*); "Insofar as we know something as limited, we are already beyond it" (*VPR* (1827) p.317); "the very fact that we know our limitation is evidence that we are beyond it, evidence of our freedom from limitation" (*EPW* §386*Z* p.36); "Even when *finite* reason is spoken of, it proves that it is infinite simply by determining itself as *finite*; for negation is finitude, lack only for that which is the *existing sublation* [*das Aufgehobensein*] of it, the *infinite* relation to itself" (*EPW* §359*A*).

<sup>101</sup> Erdmann (*VPG* pp.121-122), Walter (*VPG* pp.119-120 and p.122n line 845), and Boumann (*EPW* §408*Z* pp.181-182) all describe this.

<sup>102</sup> *VPG* p.122n line 845. See also *EPW* §408*Z* p.182.

<sup>103</sup> *Republic* 332a

Polemarchus's delusion, and shows that if he is right, then the 'just' person may just as likely end up hurting his friends and helping his enemies.<sup>104</sup>

The logical comprehension of this phenomenological experience of the loss of self is that the singular feeling passed into its opposite (thus revealing the singular feeling in its determinacy and its distinction from the soul) while the soul itself persists, and by suffering infinite pain proves itself to be not merely this singular feeling, to be as much the absence of this feeling as its presence. Over time and through these experiences the soul becomes inured to the feelings in which it was formerly absorbed, beginning to know itself as something distinct from the random, arbitrary singularity of its feelings. The soul identifies instead with what is common to all of them, i.e. it identifies with them as a totality, as a *particular* world.<sup>105</sup>

To see how this occurs, let us take as an example the one already referred to, of a man obsessed with a woman, his fixation on which eclipses everything else in his life. His fixation is based on his *total* identification with *one* feeling. Yet, this feeling is essentially something contingent and limited. Thus to lose the favor of this, the object of his affection is something that this man may very well suffer (indeed, it is something he very likely *will* suffer, if for no other reason than as a result of the erratic behavior that would follow from his demented state). What occurs when this man is deprived of what he feels to be his own self? He does not disappear in a puff of smoke: instead, he persists. He persists not only as an extended body, a chemical compound, and a living being, but also as a form of self-feeling, self-knowing spirit, feeling itself now not in a positive

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<sup>104</sup> *Republic* 334b-d

<sup>105</sup> *EPW* §§403A, 404, 409



phenomenon as before (the object of his mad fixation), but in a *negative* one: the absence of this object (which for him is his own self), an absence in which he now *feels himself* no less than he earlier felt himself in the presence of his *idée fixe*. The man therefore feels himself in the very collapse and death of his selfhood—and thereby he is resurrected. The ‘resurrection’ here is the emergence of a new ‘body’ (i.e. form of mediation between the soul and its contents): this ‘body’ is habit, a spiritual body, created by the soul for itself. In this way the life of spirit can endure the passing of its body (i.e. its circumvention in feeling’s immediacy) and the destruction of its own self (i.e. the loss of the feeling with which it was immediately identified). For natural (animal) life on the other hand, death is its final, unredeemed and unredeemable fate. It would be difficult to overstate the significance of this unique aspect of human life, as this is the aspect which differentiates the human (ensouled) ‘body’ from all other bodies. Let us examine what has been deduced here more closely.

*The soul and the loss of oneself*

When the human soul identifies with the absence of its feeling along with the feeling’s presence, then it has become habituated to this feeling such that the feeling comes and goes without any tremendous upheaval in the soul. This habituation means that the soul qualifies its identification with any merely singular feeling, identifying instead with the totality of its feelings as a totality (i.e. not with each one singly and to the exclusion of all others, as the madman does). Thus the man in our example would have to integrate his feeling for this woman into his larger life, limiting and qualifying this singular feeling to make room for his other feelings and commitments. However, we

should not conceive of the transition between self-feeling and habit as the slackening of the emotional intensity of human life.<sup>106</sup> Instead, it is the positing that: (1) as a form of *the idea*, the human soul is self-diffusive, self-differentiating, overflowing into its other<sup>107</sup>; (2) as a form of *spirit* (the self-knowing idea), the human being knows itself *as idea*, recognizing even at the primitive level of the soul that it belongs to its essence to be outside of itself in the way characteristic of nature, that this self-externality is not something that must be corrected or destroyed, but rather is only to be *qualified* (and in this qualification *preserved*) by the reunion of spiritual self-knowledge. Thus spirit is able to recognize what is external to it, *even in its externality*, as its own self.

Indeed, everything in nature and spirit is the idea. Thus everything in nature and spirit overflows itself in this way, being essentially determined by another, and thus in some sense having its own self in another. However, everything merely natural strives to stem this overflow, to preserve what we know to be its merely *abstractly* independent selfhood (its selfhood abstracted from the other by which we know it to be determined), though the loss of this abstractly independent selfhood is inevitable. Spirit on the other hand (including human beings insofar as they are spirit) strives rather *to lose* its abstract independence, freely positing itself in another, and *knowing itself* as essentially self-differentiating (and therefore identifying not only with its opposite, but even with the very opposition of its opposite). To see how this is so, see Table 2 below, and the

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<sup>106</sup> When habit has been condemned by other philosophers, it is usually this slackening of the intensity that was meant. For instance, Rousseau has nothing laudatory to say about habit (*Émile* tome premier pp.258-259). Herder (*Journal meiner Reise im Jahr 1769* pp.454-461) and Nietzsche (*Also Sprach Zarathustra* pp.13-15) were no less kind.

<sup>107</sup> The idea is defined as the realized identity of subjectivity and objectivity (*EPW* §212): it is equally the externality to itself that characterizes nature (*EPW* §§244, 247), and the knowledge of itself in its externality (i.e. spirit) (*EPW* §381). See chapters two and three for a fuller explanation.

subsequent review of the nature of the different kinds of bodies, which will explain the material given in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Comparison of different kinds of bodies**

	<b>Selfhood constituted by</b>	<b>Has its own self external to it in the form of</b>	<b>Strives but fails to attain</b>	<b>Selfhood's opposite contained within it</b>	<b>Does this sublate its opposite?</b>
<i>Mechanical body</i>	Spatial extension & figure	Another mechanical body spatially external to it	Total spatial extension (bad infinite)	Spatial limitation	No
<i>Chemical body</i>	Neutrality	Another chemical, with respect to which it is polar	Absolute neutrality	Polarity	No
<i>Organic body</i>	Life	Inorganic nature, which must be assimilated to its organic processes	Total assimilation of all inorganic nature, everlasting life (bad infinite)	Death	No
<i>Human, or ensouled body</i>	Feeling itself in its content	Its genius, or its feeling	Unending, immediate absorption in one feeling	Trauma or despair at the feeling's loss	No
	Being the ideality of its body	Its particular world, or its habits	x	Trauma, despair at the feeling's loss	Yes, through habit

We said that habit emerges when the soul in self-feeling suffers a *loss of self*: i.e. the loss of the feeling with which it identified as (the substance of) its own self. If we

recall what was stated in chapter one, we will see that it is the fate of everything corporeal to lose itself in some sense. A body limited to mechanical determinations would seem to have its self in its extension and precise figure: yet this extension and figure is only a relation to *another* extended body, which limits the first, making it what it is, and thus constituting its very self. The mechanical body has its own self outside of it therefore, and cannot bear this tension: thus it seeks unremittingly to unite with itself (viz., the other mechanical bodies which limit it), being drawn toward them by the closest thing such a body has to a life or a will: the force of gravity.<sup>108</sup> Yet the career of the mechanical body is tragic insofar as it must necessarily fail ever to enter on possession of itself: whenever it meets with its other (i.e. its own self), it *repels* it.<sup>109</sup>

The chemical however achieves the selfhood that nature denies to the merely mechanical body. A chemical is an element that is *explicitly* determined by its other (this explicit determination is expressed in the *polarity* of the chemical)—this it shares with the merely mechanical body; but the chemical, unlike the merely mechanical body, is able to *seize* the other which determines it in chemical bonding, wherein two chemicals which are polar relative to each other combine to form a new substance.<sup>110</sup> This new substance is *neutral*, at least relative to the polarity that determined its constituents, and thus is *in fact* what the mechanical body only strives to be: viz. a body for which the privation of its own self by a spatial separation is nothing it cannot overcome. Yet it becomes clear that the chemical *still* has its own self outside of it when we understand

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<sup>108</sup> *EPW* §§262, 266.

<sup>109</sup> *EPW* §266.

<sup>110</sup> *EPW* §§326-327.

that the character of this ‘self’ has changed: the criterion of selfhood is here no longer (spatial) extension and figure, but rather chemical neutrality; and though the new substance is neutral relative to its constituents, it is *still* polar relative to *another* chemical.<sup>111</sup> Moreover, no matter how many combinations and dissolutions a chemical undergoes, it remains merely *relatively* neutral: the prospect of *absolute* neutrality is only ever a phantom for the chemical, never actually achievable.<sup>112</sup>

The *living* body however is able to maintain its identity throughout chemical combination and dissolution, and thus is *in fact* what the chemical only strives to be, just as the chemical is in fact what the mechanical body only strives to be. The animal body is a system of processes that maintains itself throughout the combination and dissolution of chemicals that constitutes its intercourse with nature (consumption, respiration, etc.).<sup>113</sup> Yet the animal is not simply in possession of itself, because its self is not defined in terms of chemism: rather, the self of the animal is the assimilation of inorganic nature, and the transformation of this matter into energy for the perpetuation of these assimilative processes—in a word, the self of the animal is its *life*.<sup>114</sup> The animal is able to carry out this assimilation, but, as we mentioned earlier in this chapter, there remains for the animal a “moment of corporeity” which is inassimilable<sup>115</sup>; and in virtue of this moment

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<sup>111</sup> *EPW* §§328, 334.

<sup>112</sup> *EPW* §336.

<sup>113</sup> *EPW* §352.

<sup>114</sup> *EPW* §359&A

<sup>115</sup> *EPW* §365A&Z pp.489-492.

of corporeity, the animal is susceptible to disease<sup>116</sup> and death<sup>117</sup>—the termination of its life (the loss of its self).

To be sure, the human being does not succeed where the animal fails by living organically forever<sup>118</sup>; insofar as the human being is also organic, it is subject to death just as the animal is. Yet if we consider how the animal feels itself in its other and how the human being does so, we will see how the human being appropriates itself in a way that the animal fails to do, and how human life is not the same as animal (i.e. biological) life. As we explained in chapter one, though the animal is able to see through the appearance of alterity on the part of inorganic nature (i.e. the animal can see that inorganic nature is essentially its own self, such that the animal does not respect the appearance of nature's independence, but rather falls upon it and devours it), the animal has no comprehension of why that which is essentially its own self should appear to it as something external and independent at all. That is, the animal is totally unaware of the structure of its own self, i.e. its own implicit subjectivity. In other words, the animal does not *know itself*, it does not know that as a concretion of the idea, its nature is to overflow its own boundaries and appear to itself as an other.

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<sup>116</sup> *EPW* §371.

<sup>117</sup> *EPW* §§375-376.

<sup>118</sup> The representation of such an everlasting life is a *bad infinite*, to use Hegel's term: i.e. it would be the indefinite prolonging of organic life, without doing anything to alter the fact that organic life is mortal in principle, that the processes which constitute organic *life* are equally the processes that bring on death (see *EPW* §§94-95). The deduction of the soul for Hegel is thus not an affirmation of the doctrine of the 'immortality of the soul' if by this is meant the everlasting life of the individual human being. (See p.101n for a remark on "deduction" in Hegel). God (spirit) alone is immortal, not human individuals. Human individuals (above all philosophers) have a role in God's immortality, but not insofar as they are animated bodies. The only thing resembling immortality granted to the soul as such is its persistence through the transience of its feelings.

The human being on the other hand apprehends not only: (1) the fact that what is external to it is essentially its own self (this the animal also apprehends); but *also* (2) the fact that this, its own self, appears to it as something external (i.e. the fact that it realizes itself in determinacy and knows itself in its objectification).<sup>119</sup> When Hegel opens the philosophy of spirit with an invocation of the commandment of Apollo (“know thyself”),<sup>120</sup> it is precisely the human being’s knowledge of itself *as idea* and *as spirit* (the self-knowing idea) that he meant. It is this knowledge which constitutes spirit, and which is granted to human beings alone among all natural beings. Both the animal and the human being (as also the mechanical body and the chemical) have an other which determines them and makes them what they are (i.e. both have their selves external to them); but while the animal only manages to see through the otherness of this other, the human *also* sees that within its own self it is other to itself, such that the otherness of the other does not need to be annihilated. Instead, the human being communes with itself even in the very otherness of the other.

### *Sensation, feeling, and habit*

To see how the human being does this, let us reconsider the differences between sensation, self-feeling, and habit. It was best initially to explain self-feeling and madness with an example that seemed like it could be a real case of obsessive madness: thus we at first spoke of a man obsessing over a woman, though this example presupposed many more complicated spiritual phenomena that have not been deduced in the anthropology.

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<sup>119</sup> Thus Hegel says that madness (in which the human soul first apprehends what it knows as particular to be its own self) is a privilege (*Vorrecht*) only of man (*EPW* §408Z p.168).

<sup>120</sup> *EPW* §377.

Here on the other hand, let us return to the simpler example of sensing or feeling heat, as this better allows a comparison of all three spiritual forms we are concerned with (viz., sensation, feeling, and habit).

In sensation the human soul is ‘mixed’ with its body, such that it passively possesses certain properties (in the way that something merely natural does) as well as senses the properties of natural objects in its capacity as spirit. Yet because of this mixing, the soul senses only what is different from itself (being unable to sense anything with the same determination that it possesses itself in its capacity as a merely natural body). In other words, because of its being mixed with a body, the soul’s spiritual activity is limited by its corporeal, natural passivity, such that here nature and spirit are *opposed*, a sure sign that sensation is a poor representation of spirit.<sup>121</sup> Thus in its tactile capacity, the sensing soul is mixed with the skin and its nerves, which, insofar as they are corporeal, already bear certain natural determinations: e.g. the skin is normally about 70°F. As a result, the sensing soul is *insensible* to precisely such a determination among any natural bodies it may encounter (sensing only what varies from its own natural determination).

In feeling on the other hand, the soul dispenses with the mediating senses and the corporeal organs they use (i.e. bypasses its own corporeity), and thereby is able to ‘feel its own self’ insofar as any of its contents can be immediately identified with it. However, this ‘bypassing’ leaves its body (the mediation between it and its sensations) as an unassimilated ‘moment of corporeity’ in virtue of which the soul is susceptible to

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<sup>121</sup> Recall, in its concept spirit is *the truth of nature*, such that it presupposes nature only in order to realize itself in it (*EPW* §381). See chapter two.



disease. That is, lacking any mediation between itself and its singular content (which is, recall, its own self), the soul becomes disordered, identifying completely with different and mutually exclusive feelings. In this state of madness, the soul knows that its feeling is itself, but has not grasped that its own self is internally divided and self-determining, such that it makes its own self into an object according to a particularizing (i.e. mediating) principle immanent within it. If the soul at this stage understood that as spirit it is self-determining in this way, then it would not identify itself *simpliciter* with a single, contingent, limited feeling. Instead, it would organize its various feelings into a totality and feel itself in a given singular feeling only to the extent possible according to the rationale governing the whole of its ‘particular world.’ In other words, the soul would be *habituated* to its feelings, no longer identifying with each singular feeling immediately. In other words, the soul would have become *incarnated* in a spiritual ‘body’ of its own making. To the extent that the soul fails to organize and mediate its feelings in this way, it is the mere feeling soul in its immediacy, or self-feeling.

Take for example the various relationships with one’s genius, such as hypnotism. The hypnotized feeling soul receives certain feelings immediately, without the normal sensible mediation. Thus if a hypnotist suggests to his patient that the latter is feeling heat, a feeling of heat will emerge in the patient’s soul, though the skin and the sense of ‘concrete totality’ has been bypassed. The soul is in this case not sensing only what varies from its own unacknowledged corporeal determination (as the soul does in sensation), but instead is feeling something to which it is related immediately, and which is thus indistinguishable from its own self. We know however that this feeling of a determinate

degree of heat is incommensurate with the soul as such, insofar as this feeling excludes other feelings which the soul includes. The ‘moment of corporeity’ has been set aside, but not assimilated: insofar as feeling withdraws from the sensible mediation belonging to the body naturally (viz. the senses), identifying instead immediately with any and every content in its ‘indeterminate pit,’ feeling does nothing to assimilate the body to the soul, i.e. feeling does not replace the mediation given by nature with any of its own forms of mediation. However, the soul must not *flee* from the body; instead, it must *become flesh*. Feeling produces its own mediation only as *habit*.

There are two especially pertinent aspects of habit that we should examine separately (to the extent that their separation is possible). First, in habit, as in sensation, the soul in some sense no longer feels certain things, or at least does not attend to certain things it feels. For example, though the human body has certain natural determinations not directly under the control of the person (e.g. the temperature of one’s skin), through habit the soul can become accustomed to feelings which vary from its own natural determination. Thus one can become used to cold or heat, ceasing in some sense to feel them. However, this apathy is not a result of the kind of ‘mixing’ with the body that characterizes sensation. In sensation the soul is unaware of its being mixed with its body (which itself is merely *natural*), and is unaware that consequently it passively bears certain natural determinations. The soul in sensation is likewise unaware that as a result it is insensible to the natural determinations characterizing its unacknowledged corporeity. In contrast, in habit the soul *makes itself* inured to certain contents by repeated and prolonged exposure to these feelings *in their entirety* (i.e. including the *limitations* of

these contents, that which is *negative* in them and unable to be immediately identified with the soul in a stable way), such that its apathy with respect to these contents is acquired through *familiarity* with them, not unawareness of them (as in sensation). Habit is able to inure the soul to contents which vary from the body's own natural determinations because habit is a mediation with respect to feelings generally, including external sensations *and* inner feelings. Once anything is sensed, it is deposited into the soul's 'indeterminate pit' as a feeling in the soul's possession, with which it can (in sickness) unite immediately, bypassing the mediating senses. Yet by repeated exposure to this and similar feelings, the soul is able to produce within itself a sort of generalized image of these feelings in virtue of which it need never again relate to such feelings immediately. Thus while in sensation the soul is still a form of the merely natural soul (*natürliche Seele*), habit is the soul's "second nature,"<sup>122</sup> the nature (or corporeal element, i.e. body) that the soul has created for itself.

Second, in habit the soul becomes aware of that in the feeling which is in some sense incompatible with the soul (i.e. that in the feeling which makes it unable to be stably identified with the soul *immediately*). This is precisely what makes it possible for the soul to become inured to a given feeling in the way described above. So long as the feeling is for the soul simply itself *simpliciter* (as it must be when the soul is related to it merely immediately), the soul relates to its feeling in the brutal way that the animal relates to inorganic nature: as something with only the semblance of objectivity (which is not to be dwelled upon or taken seriously), but which is really one's own self (which for its part is unreflectively taken as something simple, undifferentiated, and only *abstractly*

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<sup>122</sup> *EPW* §410A.

independent). It is because the madman does not grasp that the singular feelings are incompatible (in some sense) with his own soul, yet identifies with each immediately that he feels the anguish and torment that characterize his insanity (just as the animal takes inorganic nature to be its own self *simpliciter*, and thus in the face of nature's apparent independence feels rage (*Zorn*) toward its object<sup>123</sup>). The madman, like the animal, does not know that it belongs to the nature of his own self to appear to him as something objective, and thus though he communes with himself in his object, he does not do so in the *objectivity*, i.e. in the otherness of the object. Habit is that spiritual phenomenon in which the human being posits that it is identified with all of its singular feelings, but not immediately (rather, by mediation of the particular habits). In this way the human being is *in fact* what the animal only strives to be: viz., the assimilation of the final "moment of corporeity," becoming truly the ideality of its body. Thus while habit differs from sensation (insofar as habit is the mediation that spirit provides for itself, such that the soul is familiar with the habituated content, in contrast to the determinations of the sense organs of which the soul in sensation is ignorant), habit seems in some sense to be a return to a form of "sensation" loosely understood.

*Habit as a kind of "sense" with a wider scope than Empfindung*

What I mean by saying that habit seems to be a return to a form of sensation is: (1) that habit involves the reintroduction of a form of mediation between the soul and its contents (in this habit resembles sensation, but differs from the intervening stage of self-feeling); (2) that habit makes it possible for a person to have a 'sense' for a much wider range of phenomena than is possible with sensation proper (i.e. the form of the natural

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<sup>123</sup> *EPW* §365A.

soul that Hegel calls *Empfindung*). The wider range of phenomena that habit opens for experience includes social and other specifically human phenomena (see the examples I will provide below).

The first point above (viz. that both sensation and habit involve the soul's mediation of its contents) is true simply in virtue of the ontological structures of *Empfindung* and *Gewohnheit*. The second point on the other hand seems to depend also on the usage of the term "sense." To be sure, when I say that habit is a kind of "sense" I am not arguing that what Hegel calls sensation in §§399-402 does not differ from what he calls habit in §§409-410: mediation through material sense organs belongs necessarily to how Hegel understands *Empfindung*, and it is just as necessarily absent from his understanding of *Gewohnheit*. I only mean that the essence of habit can be elucidated by attention to the similarities between sensation and habit, and the careful use of the term "sense": if here (in contrast to the technical definition of *Empfindung* as given in §§399-402) we understand the possession of a "sense" for something to mean only the possession of a medium for experiencing a certain dimension of the world, and the ability (through this medium) to discern contrary qualities of which one would be utterly ignorant in the absence of such a sense, then both *Empfindung* and *Gewohnheit* would qualify as "senses," their differences notwithstanding.

As *Empfindung*, the soul is simply given *by nature* the field of objects which can be sensed (e.g. light, sound, odor, taste, etc.) and in virtue of its naturally given form of mediation (viz. the sense organs), the soul as *Empfindung* is able to discern bright from dark, loud from quiet, fragrant from malodorous, sweet from bitter, etc. In this way,

*Empfindung* makes possible the soul's experience of every natural object and natural quality—and this is no small feat. Yet habit is still more marvelous, insofar as it has no pre-determined field of objects: through habit the soul can unceasingly give itself new objects, new forms of experience. Indeed, we might say that through habit the soul creates for itself *new senses* which make possible its experience of a wider range of phenomena (including spiritual phenomena) and their attendant qualities.

Some examples will help to clarify this feature of habit. If one becomes habituated to the terms of social interaction within a society, one acquires a *sense of social grace* or *propriety* in virtue of which one can distinguish good manners from bad. If one becomes habituated to the fine arts one acquires a *sense of taste*—not in the physiological sense but in the sense of being able to discern beauty and ugliness. Habituation to ambiguities in language allows one to develop a *sense of wit*, in virtue of which one can distinguish the witty from the dull. Habituation to the possible incongruities between the reputations others enjoy and their true merit, or to the disparity between what one says and what one may mean, engender a *sense of satire*, in virtue of which one can distinguish the satirical, sarcastic and ironical from the sincere and naïve. As social grace, wit and satire<sup>124</sup> are not natural objects or qualities, and thus the apprehension of them is not assigned to any part of the human body, it is clear that habit

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<sup>124</sup> Let us leave aside the case of beauty since it may be that natural things can be beautiful even in their naturalness, and this would seem to indicate that a beautiful object would necessarily be correlated with a certain sense organ. Indeed, even among the fine arts, the appreciation of beauty in painting or sculpture can hardly be separated from vision, just as appreciation of beautiful music cannot be separated from hearing (though seeing something as beautiful is certainly not the same as simply seeing it). But we need not concern ourselves with the details of aesthetic controversies here. The point being made above is simply that we can through habituation become progressively aware of specifically human (not natural and not corporeal) phenomena (e.g. propriety, wit, satire), in this way developing a 'sense' for such objects, which can be continually refined by further experience.

is a way of developing a ‘sense’ for contents without having a certain sense organ devoted to the sensation of such a content.

To be sure, one can become habituated also to purely natural contents (the objects of *Empfindung*): living in a cold climate, one becomes habituated to low temperatures; what is initially experienced as a very bright light can through habituation be stripped of its excessive brilliance; after a few minutes of hearing noises like rain falling or background chatter one becomes accustomed to them and ceases to be distracted by them. When giving examples in the anthropology Hegel restricts himself for the most part to cases of habituation to such natural contents (e.g. cold, heat, fatigue, sweet tastes).<sup>125</sup> However, he does give some examples there of habituation to contents that belong more to the spiritual side of the human being (e.g. habituation to misfortune, to renunciation of desire, to the skilled performance of a certain activity, even to the activity of thinking),<sup>126</sup> and habit figures largely in later developments of the philosophy of spirit, even if Hegel rarely notes it explicitly.

*Other spiritual phenomena in which habit plays a role: internalization, imagination, and ethical life*

For instance, internalization and imagination (discussed in §§452-460 of the psychology section) cannot be understood without presupposing the operation of habit in

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<sup>125</sup> *EPW* §410A.

<sup>126</sup> *EPW* §410A. As Moland notes (“‘Inheriting, Earning and Owning: the Source of Practical Identity in Hegel’s Anthropology” p.149), habit also functions to establish a certain distance between a person and the mores of her community, allowing her to call them into question.

the background.<sup>127</sup> Internalization (*Erinnerung*) is the process whereby intelligence creates for and within itself a general image based on its repeated experience of certain contents: i.e. it is the transformation of external intuitions into an internal image.<sup>128</sup> Imagination (*Einbildung*) is intelligence's ability to wield its images (*Bilden*), giving them existence as symbols and signs.<sup>129</sup> Both of these processes depend on the ability of spirit to keep from becoming completely absorbed in each singular intuition: without this ability, internalization could not create general images of its received intuitions, because it would be unable to extricate itself from a total identification with each intuition singly (and so would not even be able to relate different intuitions to each other). Likewise, without habit imagination could not name objects, or generate language at all insofar as the system of signs (including words) is for imagination something like a complex of habits, in virtue of which the signified (intuited objects) can be subsumed under general terms and integrated into an intelligible order (just as in the anthropology feelings are shorn of their immediacy by being subsumed under the habits which mediate their relation to the soul).

Thus both habit and internalization/imagination are spirit's ability to create its own mediation between itself and its content: just as habit mediates the relation between the soul and the feelings which would otherwise be buried in the "indistinct pit

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<sup>127</sup> See also Kirk Pillow's article "Habituating Madness and Phantasying Art in Hegel's *Encyclopedia*." There he makes the case for a connection not just between habit and imagination as it is given in the psychology, but also in between habit and the use of imagination in the creation of fine art.

<sup>128</sup> *EPW* §§452-454.

<sup>129</sup> *EPW* §§455-460.



[*bestimmungsloser Schacht*]” of the unconscious,<sup>130</sup> so the production and use of images in internalization and imagination mediates intelligence’s relation to its intuitions which would otherwise be buried in the “night-like pit [*nächtlichen Schacht*]... without being in consciousness [*ohne daß sie im Bewußtsein wären*]”<sup>131</sup> The difference between the unconscious proper to the soul and the unconscious proper to intelligence is that on the level of the soul, consciousness (awareness of an object understood *as external*<sup>132</sup>) has not yet been posited at all, whereas on the level of intelligence not only is the externality of objects posited, but the interiority of spirit and the presence of external objects *within* spirit’s interiority in the form of intuitions are also posited.<sup>133</sup> Intelligence has an ‘unconscious’ to the extent that the intuitions within it have not yet been sufficiently internalized (*erinnerte*), and thus are present within it as foreign contents, problematically accessible and not under intelligence’s complete control. In this way, the formation and use of images by intelligence is a parallel process to the soul’s habituation to feelings.

Habit is also presupposed by is the third moment of objective spirit (see chapter three for an outline): what Hegel calls *Sittlichkeit*, which is usually translated as “ethical life.”<sup>134</sup> This translation should be understood to refer to integration of the individual into the collective *ethos* of a people. The ethos of a people is expressed by its customs (*Sitten*): it is through these customs that the good is determined into definite and socially

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<sup>130</sup> *EPW* §403A.

<sup>131</sup> *EPW* §453A.

<sup>132</sup> *EPW* §413.

<sup>133</sup> *EPW* §445.

<sup>134</sup> On this point see also Moland “Inheriting, Earning and Owning: the Source of Practical Identity in Hegel’s Anthropology” pp.155-164.

recognized practices, rights and obligations. Customs mediate between the individual conscience and her action in the world, which are immediately united in what Hegel calls “morality [*Moralität*].” In the absence of customs (i.e. in morality as such), there is always a disparity between the act and the intention insofar as the act only ambiguously represents the intention (see chapter three for a brief sketch of the transition between morality and ethical life). Custom provides a set of ready-made actions that are intersubjectively recognized as representing certain intentions: thus within a certain culture, an individual can express a friendly and non-threatening intention by certain gestures with her face and hands, the posture of her body, etc. All those in her culture will be able to interpret such gestures accurately, and her point of view will be successfully communicated to others. Without a culture antedating the individuals who are born into it, a culture into which these individuals can be integrated, the actions and speech of individuals would be ambiguous: these individuals would be unable to objectify their intentions in a way appropriate for communication and intersubjective understanding.

It is thus in the process of acculturation that individuals develop the proper habits for social life: this process involves exposure to the kinds of experiences necessary for the development of the kinds of ‘senses’ (i.e. habits) we mentioned above: e.g. one becomes polite (i.e. develops a ‘sense of propriety’) through exposure to the proper way people should act in a given society, i.e. through habituation to the way of life proper to one’s culture. Just as there is a process of natural development (occurring prenatally) during which one develops the sense organs, there is a process of spiritual (or cultural) development in which one should cultivate the proper habits (i.e. the proper ‘senses’ for

spiritual phenomena). And, just as some people have the misfortune (as a result of natural factors) of being deprived of certain *Empfindungen* (e.g. the blind or deaf), so some people have the misfortune (as a result of social factors) of failing to develop the proper habits. For example, if one's ethical environment (whether family, civil society, or state) is less than ideal, one may fail to develop the proper habits (the proper 'senses' for social phenomena). Such people would include for example louts (who fail to develop a sense of social grace), philistines (who fail to develop a sense of taste), bores (who fail to develop a sense of wit), etc. Such people are hobbled in their ability to move in the human, social world just as those deprived of a natural sense are hobbled in their ability to move in the natural world.

Of course, we must not fail to note the differences between the natural and the cultural "senses." One such difference lies in the possibility of rectifying a faulty "sense" or its lack altogether. One who is blind cannot have her sight restored, but a rude person (even a violent criminal) can always be reformed into a polite, courteous and law-abiding person (provided that the appropriate social circumstances, resources, and attention are brought to bear). Indeed, no habits are possessed naturally, just as no habits are intrinsically unattainable: all habits are acquired in the course of one's lifetime through repetition of the proper experiences. Thus all habits are subject to waning or failure to develop altogether, just as all habits are subject to revision. The cultivation of the right habits is what is properly called education: this is what Hegel and Goethe meant by *Bildung*, and what Aristotle meant by *paideia*.

Indeed, the Aristotelian overtones here are unmistakable. For Aristotle, education is nothing other than the cultivation of the proper habits,<sup>135</sup> and the precise character of these habits should be appropriate to culture to which one belongs.<sup>136</sup> Moreover, for Aristotle the cultivation of habit acquaints one with a certain dimension of the natural or social world which was always present but of which one was previously ignorant as a result of not having the proper attunement to this dimension, an attunement acquired through habit.<sup>137</sup> Similarly, we have seen that for Hegel the cultivation of habits opens up a certain dimension of experience of which one had previously no idea, and of which one would remain ignorant unless properly educated. Much of Hegel's philosophy of objective spirit is occupied with this kind of acculturation: thus the family is (in part) concerned with "the upbringing of children,"<sup>138</sup> i.e. the *spiritual* development of human beings (rather than merely the *natural* birth of children), as are civil society<sup>139</sup> and the state.<sup>140</sup>

The *Sitten* of objective spirit are thus forms of mediation that resemble the *Gewohnheiten* of the anthropology. Moreover, these customs are themselves the *habits* that individuals cultivate during the process of their socialization.<sup>141</sup> That habit is integral

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<sup>135</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics* 1103b23-25.

<sup>136</sup> *Politics* 1310a13-35, 1332b13-1334b28.

<sup>137</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics* 1103b14-21, 1113a23-35.

<sup>138</sup> *GPR* §§173-175.

<sup>139</sup> *GPR* §239.

<sup>140</sup> *GPR* §§268-270. See also *GPR* §153A.

<sup>141</sup> Hegel explicitly calls them habits frequently. See for example *EPW* §§485, 486, *GPR* §151, as well as when he refers to the role of the ethical "disposition [*Gesinnung*]," which is simply another way of saying

in both imagination and ethical life means that habit is necessary for the construction and interpretation of symbols and signs: that imagination is concerned with producing signs is obvious,<sup>142</sup> but it takes only a bit of reflection to see that ethical action (action in the context of social customs) is also the production of signs. Recall, customs establish the meaning of actions for a certain culture: thus in our culture wearing black is understood as a sign of grief, while in China this meaning is expressed by a different action (viz. wearing white). Indeed, the fact that the process of acculturation is called “*Bildung*” indicates that it is a matter of making the individual into a sign or an image (*Bild*) of the culture itself. Acculturation can thus be likened to imagination (*Einbildung*), though on a larger scale. It is appropriate that habit should play such an important role in sign-making in the psychology and in objective spirit, since habit has this function in the anthropology as well: it is habit which gives the soul actuality in its body, rendering the body a mere sign for the soul.<sup>143</sup>

#### Actual soul

Once the soul is thoroughly inured to its feelings, then it has become ‘incarnate’ in the spiritual ‘body’ that is the system of its habits.<sup>144</sup> We call the soul’s habits its ‘body’ because they fill the role that the corporeal body and its sense organs filled in

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the same thing, and even contains within it the connotation of ‘sense’ (*Sinn*) (*EPW* §§486A, 513-515, 537-538, *GPR* §§268-269).

<sup>142</sup> *EPW* §§457-459.

<sup>143</sup> *EPW* §411.

<sup>144</sup> In fact, habit seems to belong to the feeling soul section only insofar as it is in a nascent state. It is plain that once a soul becomes habituated, it is *ipso facto* actual. Hans-Christian Lucas makes this point as well (““Die ,souveräne Undankbarkeit’ des Geistes gegenüber der Natur“ p.286).

sensation. Since “feeling” is characterized by the bypassing of this natural mediation (viz. the corporeal body and its sense organs) and the consequently immediate relation of the soul to its content, there is an opportunity for habit to intervene by providing another form of mediation between the soul and its content. We saw in our discussion of feeling how an inner form of mediation was required. This is precisely what habit is: habit mediates the soul not only with the sensible determinacies of external nature, but even with the natural determinacy of the soul’s own body. Thus when the soul has created for itself its own ‘spiritual body,’ it has also completely assimilated its own natural body as well.<sup>145</sup> Consequently, once the soul has attained this level of development, it shines through its body, *revealing itself* in this corporeity.

*The body as the ‘sign’ of the soul*

Hegel says that the body is only a sign for the actual soul: the body thus refers not to itself, but only to the soul.<sup>146</sup> To see what he means by calling the body a “sign

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<sup>145</sup> Moland is incorrect when she says that “In ‘Actual Soul’ [...] the self concluded that it was essentially self-determination and so did not need the body” (“Inheriting, Earning and Owning: the Source of Practical Identity in Hegel’s Anthropology” p.163). The soul does not rid itself of its body through habituation and actualization: it merely assimilates its body to itself. It is rather immediate feeling and self-feeling which are characterized by the attempt to do without the body completely.

<sup>146</sup> *EPW* §411. Hegel may have had in mind the following passage from Rousseau’s *Émile* in which he contrasts the poorly raised young man, thrust too early into civil society, with the well raised Émile: “I cannot keep from imagining on the face of the young man described above something impertinent, sugary, and affected, which displeases and repels regular people and on the face of mine an interesting and simple physiognomy that shows contentment, true serenity of the soul, that inspires esteem and confidence, and that seems to wait only for the offer of friendship to give his own to those who approach him. It is said that the physiognomy is only a simple development of traits already marked by nature. As for me, I think that aside from this development, facial features are formed insensibly and take shape by the frequent and habitual impression of certain affections on the soul. These impressions make their mark on the face, nothing is more certain; and when they become habitual, they must leave lasting impressions on it. There you have my conception of how physiognomy presents character, and that one can sometimes judge the one by the other without looking for mysterious explanations that assume knowledge we do not have” (*Émile* tome premier p.386). However, Rousseau certainly goes further here than Hegel would be willing to go: Hegel denounced physiognomy as a pseudo-science (insofar as hard and fast rules cannot be applied in the induction of a person’s character by their appearance), even though it is the nature of the soul to reveal

[*Zeichen*]” for the soul, it is useful to refer to the psychology section, where Hegel distinguishes between a symbol (*Symbol*) and a sign (*Zeichen*). A symbol refers to something else, but in such a way that what naturally and immediately belongs to the symbol (its color, shape, sound, etc.) has a role in its representation, while a sign refers to something else in such a way that its natural, immediate shape has no role.<sup>147</sup>

The perfect example of a sign is *language*, insofar as in language a certain thought-content is arbitrarily connected with a certain sound. Thus onomatopoetic words (i.e. words which reproduce the physical event of a certain sound, such as “crash,” “bang,” etc.) are in some sense not properly language, insofar as they are more symbols than signs (and for that reason less developed than language ought to be). Onomatopoetic words are symbolic because in them intelligence fails to properly exert its power by bestowing a certain sense on an otherwise unrelated sound, bowing instead to the *merely natural* phonic contours of a word.<sup>148</sup> Another good example of a mere symbol is the association of an eagle with strength<sup>149</sup>: here spirit merely takes an immediately existing object (an eagle) which has a certain property (strength), and declares this property to be the essential part of the symbol, the rest (feathers, flight, oviparity) being inessential. On the other hand, the association of the color blue with Bavaria<sup>150</sup> (i.e. a sign) is more

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itself corporeally (*EPW* §411*A*) (here Hegel follows Aristotle, *Physiognomy* 805b2-806a7). We are thus left to lament with Medea: “O Zeus! Why have you given us clear signs to tell/ True gold from counterfeit; but when we need to know/ Bad *men* from good, the flesh bears no revealing mark?” (Euripides, *Medea* 516-518).

<sup>147</sup> *EPW* §458&*A*.

<sup>148</sup> *EPW* §459*A*.

<sup>149</sup> *VPG* p.207. See also *VPG* pp.80-81.

arbitrary, and demonstrates the power spirit has over the immediate content which will serve as its sign: here *everything* immediate in the sign (e.g. the appearance of blue in this or that object, its status as a primary color, etc.) is inessential; and the only essential thing is the signification given by spirit.

When Hegel calls the body a mere *sign* for the actual soul, he thus means that here the soul has fully extricated itself from nature, and subordinated nature to itself. To fully appreciate the significance of this development, we can turn to parts of the natural soul section which have to do with symbolism. In an *Anmerkung* Hegel indicates briefly that sensations can be symbolic for the sensing soul,<sup>151</sup> but it is only in the lectures that he explains this at length. There he shows how colors and tones can be symbolic for the soul,<sup>152</sup> giving rise to a mood (*Stimmung*) according to certain immediate properties of the sensation: e.g. black or white (as the absence of determination) symbolize innocence,<sup>153</sup> while red, because of its intensity, symbolizes power and strength, while blue symbolizes mildness.<sup>154</sup> Blue's *symbolical* character as evoking a sense of mildness (in virtue of what immediately appears in the color) must be contrasted with its *signifying* role in representing Bavaria (which has nothing to do with blue's immediacy).

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<sup>150</sup> *VP*G p.209.

<sup>151</sup> *EP*W §401A.

<sup>152</sup> Hegel says this with the caveat (given in Boumann's *Zusätze*) that these cannot be symbols in the proper sense of the word, since symbolization (being deduced properly only in the psychology section) presupposes *consciousness* (the object of the phenomenology, which represents objects to itself as *external*) insofar as it involves taking a sensation (known to be external) as referring in some sense to an inner meaning (*EP*W §401Z p.108). (See p.101n for a remark on "deduction" in Hegel).

<sup>153</sup> *VP*G p.81.

<sup>154</sup> *VP*G p.82.



Sensations can be symbolic because they have an unposited immediacy: the soul simply finds itself with them: Hegel plays on the word *Empfindung* by noting that the soul in sensation simply “*finds* [findet]” its content within it,<sup>155</sup> not having produced this content itself or mediated it by habits of its own creation. The soul at this stage is mixed with its body without being fully cognizant of this fact and its implications: it does not know that it is already mediating its relation to its sensations (through its sense organs), and is in no position to voluntarily determine the meaning of its contents (which would render them *signs* rather than symbols). To be sure, the actual soul is still far from the will (which is deduced only in the psychology section, after symbolization and signification proper are deduced), and thus it is a bit misleading to say that the actual soul ‘voluntarily’ determines the meaning of its contents, rendering its body only a sign for it. However, it is at least true that the actual soul has created its own form of mediation in relation to its sensations and feelings (viz. its habits), and thus is related immediately neither to its feelings (as are the feeling soul in its immediacy and self-feeling), nor to its form of mediation (as sensation is ‘mixed’ with its body). In this sense the actual soul does succeed in cancelling the immediacy of both its sensations and its feelings, thereby rendering its body a sign, which refers only to it (the soul) and not to itself.

In other words, the soul is the truth of the body: the body is only a presupposition (*Voraussetzung*) of the soul,<sup>156</sup> i.e. the material which the soul sets (*setzt*) before (*vor*)

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<sup>155</sup> *EPW* §399.

<sup>156</sup> To be sure, the human body is never *actually* separated from the soul (except in death). The human body should always be considered already ensouled. However, when we say that the body is the presupposition for the soul, we mean only to abstract in thought the material element of the human being and affirm that this material element is not something independent, referring only to itself. Rather, this material element is the manifestation of the soul, as its sign.

itself in order to reveal or manifest itself in it. The soul here has reached its summit insofar as it has realized the concept of spirit (so far as such an achievement is possible at this stage). Recall, according to its concept, spirit: (a) is the truth of nature,<sup>157</sup> or (b) the idea whose object, just as its subject, is the concept<sup>158</sup>; (c) spirit can suffer the infinite pain of withdrawal into itself away from all objectivity,<sup>159</sup> while (d) maintaining itself as affirmative,<sup>160</sup> and which through this absolute negativity (e) reveals or manifests itself,<sup>161</sup> thus (f) rendering itself actuality.<sup>162</sup> Let us proceed through these aspects one by one to see how the actual soul is the realized concept of spirit (to the extent that such is possible at this stage).

*(a) Spirit is the truth of nature*

Recall Table 2 above and its explanation. There we showed that the mechanical body strives to unite with that which determines it in its identity (and hence can be called its own self), but which is spatially external, though these strivings are frustrated by the same mechanical determinacies which render the body external to itself in the first place. The chemical on the other hand can bond with its opposite if the two are juxtaposed: spatial separation is nothing for the chemical, which is thus in fact what the mechanical body only strives to be. Insofar as the chemical is in reality what the mechanical body

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<sup>157</sup> *EPW* §381.

<sup>158</sup> *EPW* §381.

<sup>159</sup> *EPW* §382.

<sup>160</sup> *EPW* §382.

<sup>161</sup> *EPW* §§383-384.

<sup>162</sup> *EPW* §383.

*ought* to be but fails to be, the chemical can be called the *truth* of the merely mechanical body. Hegel defines truth as agreement between concept and existence<sup>163</sup>: what the mechanical body strives to be, what it ought to be, is its concept; it is the chemical however which in its existence actually attains this concept; thus the chemical is the truth of the merely mechanical body.

In Table 2 we further showed that the living (animal) body is the truth of the chemical, and (more importantly) that the human ‘body’ (viz. habit) is the truth of organic, or animal life. The animal strives to assimilate nature completely: this assimilation is its concept. Yet the animal does not realize this concept perfectly: there always remains for it an inassimilable “moment of corporeity” in virtue of which it is subject to disease and death. In habit however, the human being mediates its relation to all of its sensible and feeling contents, and thus has completely assimilated its ‘corporeal moment,’ achieving *in fact* what nature in its highest form strove to achieve but could not; i.e. the human being realizes nature’s concept, and thus is the truth of nature.

*(b) Spirit is the idea whose object, just as its subject, is the concept*

We already know that everything in nature and spirit is the idea.<sup>164</sup> To say however that spirit is the self-knowing idea, the idea which has itself for its object (which is precisely what it is to say that spirit is the idea that has the concept for its subject and its object) is only to restate what we have seen in the anthropology: the soul in sensation is determined into the five senses, and in virtue of this determination it is receptive to the

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<sup>163</sup> *EPW* §213A.

<sup>164</sup> *EPW* §§247, 381.

forms in which nature renders itself sensible (viz. light,<sup>165</sup> sound,<sup>166</sup> particularized airiness or odor,<sup>167</sup> particularized water or taste,<sup>168</sup> weight,<sup>169</sup> heat,<sup>170</sup> and shape<sup>171</sup>). There is a correspondence between the ways nature makes itself able to be sensed and the ways the soul is able to sense because both are the idea, and are ruled by the same ontology. To see how this same ontology is concretized in nature and in spirit, we must attend to the moments of the concept: universality (self-identity), particularity (distinction, determinacy), and singularity (the inward reflection of the universal, i.e. the positing of particularity in universality and universality in particularity).<sup>172</sup>

In nature, light and sound express the unity of a body in abstraction from its material difference from itself; and sight and hearing are the soul's capacities to sense precisely this "physical ideality." Odor and taste express a body's difference from itself in abstraction from its unity, as in these the body quite literally breaks apart; accordingly, smell and taste are the soul's capacities to know this "real difference." Finally, weight, heat, and shape express a body as a concrete totality, a determined universal that maintains its identity with itself even in its determinacy (thus for instance shape reveals a

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<sup>165</sup> *EPW* §§317-320.

<sup>166</sup> *EPW* §§300-302.

<sup>167</sup> *EPW* §321.

<sup>168</sup> *EPW* §321.

<sup>169</sup> *EPW* §293.

<sup>170</sup> *EPW* §303-307.

<sup>171</sup> *EPW* §§310-315 .

<sup>172</sup> *EPW* §164&A.

body extended and outside of itself, yet, in virtue of its figure, all one body); and touch is the soul's receptivity to precisely this totality.

In these three groups of natural phenomena ((a) light and sound; (b) odor and taste; (c) weight, heat, and shape), and the three corresponding types of senses (( $\alpha$ ) sight and hearing; ( $\beta$ ) smell and taste; ( $\gamma$ ) touch), the concept is expressed in its: (1) universality, (2) particularity, and (3) singularity. Thus when the soul senses a determination of nature, the concept (in one of its moments) is both subject and object.

Not only in sensation, but also and more adequately in feeling (in its highest concretion as *habit*), we can see the concept as both subject and object. It being presupposed that feeling in its first two stages has disturbed the soul's relation to its content by setting aside the naturally given form of mediation (the sense organs), it is clear that habit provides a new form of mediation, one created by the soul for itself. The soul here may be related to natural determinations which are concretions of the concept in the way described above, or it may be related to spiritual determinations (as we have seen); yet the soul in habit is a concretion of the concept in a different way than it was in sensation. In sensation the three moments of the concept were realized in the three kinds of senses (physical ideality, real difference, concrete totality); in habit the soul itself is the universal (the 'indeterminate pit'), the habits are the particularity immanent in this universality (the soul's 'particular world'), which mediates the relation between the soul (as universal) and the (singular) feeling. Thus in habit as well both subject and object are the concept.

(c) *Spirit can suffer the infinite pain of its withdrawal from all objectivity*

To see how the soul suffers infinite pain, we must refer to two aspects of the feeling soul: (1) the circumvention of the body and its sense organs that characterizes the feeling soul in its immediacy and as self-feeling; (2) the ‘loss of self’ the soul suffers when it loses the feeling with which it identified (the loss in which habit is cultivated). In the circumvention of the body and its sense organs, the feeling soul withdraws from its corporeity, from that in virtue of which it was able to know certain determinacies of nature (viz. those varying from the determinations of its own sense organs) as *objects* (i.e. as sensations from which it, as soul, remained distinct in its universality). Thus in the transition from sensation to feeling, the soul withdraws at once from its own body, and from its sensation of the objects of the natural world. As a consequence of this withdrawal, the soul is only (initially) able to relate immediately to its contents, failing to know them objectively in distinction from itself.

The immediacy of feeling however renders the soul susceptible to the suffering of *infinite pain, absolute negativity*, when this feeling passes into its opposite and the soul loses its own self. To see how the ‘pain’ here is infinite, and the ‘negativity’ is absolute, contrast feeling with sensation: in sensation the soul can feel pain or discomfort,<sup>173</sup> but this pain will never be *infinite* because the sensation is always a determinacy in the face

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<sup>173</sup> In fact, feeling pain or pleasure presupposes much material that has not been deduced. (See p.101n for a remark on “deduction” in Hegel). It first becomes possible truly to speak of pleasure or pain when one arrives at practical feeling (where it has been deduced that thought is self-realizing, such that spirit as practical feeling exists as a mere demand that the world agree with its own inner determinacy), in the practical spirit section of the psychology (see chapter three). The kind of ‘pain’ we may discuss in relation to sensation is more abstract: the sensation of a natural determinacy which varies enormously with the sensing soul’s own unacknowledged corporeity (as when the soul with its skin at 70°F feels something at 200°F). We could not call this “pain” in the proper sense only because spirit at this stage does not know that the determinations in the world of nature ought to agree with its own inner determinacy.

of which the sensing soul ‘maintains its universality.’ That is, the pain for the sensing soul is always something from which it knows itself to be separate and independent. In feeling however, the soul is related *immediately* to its content, not knowing itself as in any way distinct from this feeling: thus the loss of this feeling is the loss of the soul’s own self, the *infinite* pain of *absolute* negativity.

*(d) Spirit maintains itself as affirmative even in absolute negativity*

Insofar as the soul endures the loss of itself (i.e. the loss of the feeling with which it identified immediately) described above, then it ‘maintains itself as affirmative.’ This self-maintenance as affirmative on the part of the human being in habit is to be contrasted with the total destruction of the singular animal in its death. When the singular animal proves to be susceptible to organic disease (one organ operating at variance with the whole), the animal dies; and in this death, it (as singular) is totally annihilated. Only the genus survives (though even it survives only in another generation of equally imperfect and mortal singular animals—i.e. in the manner of a ‘bad infinity’). In contrast, when the human being shows itself to be subject to the sickness of the soul (the soul-like part operating at variance with the other moments of subjective spirit), the human being ‘dies’ only in a way that does not preclude its resurrection in the ‘spiritual body’ of its ‘second nature.’ The ‘death’ the human being undergoes and survives is the withdrawal from its body to the immediate identification with its content, and the subsequent *loss* of this content, the identification with its opposite. Yet not despite, but *through* the very experience of this loss, the human being emerges with a new form of sensible/feeling

mediation (i.e. a new ‘body’), viz. habit, thus ‘maintaining itself as affirmative’ even in absolute negativity.

*(e) Spirit reveals, or manifests itself*

We spent a good deal of time in chapter two explaining this aspect of the concept of spirit. We were at pains there to provide all sorts of examples and analogies to explain what this “revelation [*Offenbarung*]” or “manifestation [*Manifestation*]” involves, referring to the Athenian spirit being revealed in the city of Athens, and Achilles being manifested in his armor. At that time we had to use our imaginations to conjure up images of a concept which we did not grasp in the proper, rational way. Now that we have traversed the whole of the anthropology on the contrary, we have seen *in concreto* how spirit in its embodied immediacy suffers infinite pain, withdrawing from all objectivity, while yet remaining affirmative in some sense. We have seen, in other words, that the soul has fashioned its own ‘body’ for itself, a *spiritual body*, which is a *sign* (not a symbol) for the soul, i.e. which refers only to the soul, such that the soul is *revealed* in it.

Recall the distinction we drew when explaining spirit’s revelation of itself in chapter two between a ‘relative self-determination’ and an ‘absolute self-determination.’ In any case of self-determination, the self renders itself something determinate and objective in some sense, but the difference between relative and absolute self-determination hinges on whether this determinacy is something to which the self may remain removed and indifferent, or whether the very existence of this determinacy is immanent and implied within the self as such.



To illustrate, we described in chapter two a case of relative self-determination as when a nation (in its legislature) passes some obscure, almost insignificant law, e.g. regulating the minimum width of rural highways. The law that is passed here does indeed have its origin wholly in the national will: that is, absent the national will, the law would not exist. Examined from this perspective, the connection between the self and its determinacy appears strong—indeed, necessary. Yet examined from the opposite perspective (from the nation toward the law), it is clear that the nation does not invest and realize its very self in creating this law: if the law were never to be enforced, or were it never to have been drafted at all, the nation would remain largely—or perhaps even completely—the same. Thus although the law depends wholly on the national will for its existence, the national will does not depend on this particular law in order to be what it is.

But now consider a case of *absolute* self-determination, in which the determinacy issues from the very heart of the self, which cannot do otherwise—at least not without ceasing to be itself. In keeping with the political example above, we can refer to a nation which, when invaded by another country, either throws itself wholeheartedly into defense and resistance, or capitulates and cedes its independence (and its very self) to its enemy. In this case, the act of the national will, its determination of itself in one course of another, is not something with respect to which it can remain indifferent: how the nation decides at this moment determines whether it persists and remains itself, or is destroyed, becoming something other than itself. In other words, the very continued existence and identity of the self is in question here, and in its determination of itself it realizes what it always was (be it independent or servile). To take another example, an individual human

being can love another person with all of his heart, and be completely devoted to her: when he makes a commitment to her, he limits his possibilities, but in doing so deprives himself of nothing essential to him; instead, he becomes what he is in this commitment, becoming *really*, in a *determinate* way what he previously was only essentially and implicitly.

It is clear then that self-determination (making oneself into something determinate, limiting oneself) is not necessarily self-deprivation, or self-mutilation. Indeed, quite the contrary: were a person to remain indeterminate, then he would be potentially many things, but actually nothing. This is what has been demonstrated in the anthropology: the feeling soul has many feelings, and would identify completely with all of them, but this would only be to really identify with none. What the soul must do is fashion its mass of feelings into a particular world, a coherent totality in which its relation to its feelings is mediated by habit. It is only in its habits that the soul determines itself absolutely, and it is only for this reason that habit is called the soul's second nature, the body which it has created for itself, and in which *its own self* is revealed.<sup>174</sup>

*(f) In revealing itself in habit, the soul renders itself actual*

Actuality (*Wirklichkeit*) is a technical term for Hegel. It refers to the "unity of essence and existence, of the inner and outer."<sup>175</sup> Actuality is deduced in the *Science of Logic* when it must be demonstrated that essence cannot hold itself away from existence:

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<sup>174</sup> To be sure, in the corporealization of the emotions that belongs to the section on sensation, the soul does realize itself in some way as well. Barbara Merker argues that this is to be distinguished from the soul's realization of itself in a body that characterizes habit and actual soul by the fact that the corporealization of the emotions is involuntary, while habit is deliberately cultivated (and accordingly habit plays an important role in later phenomena covered in the psychology section) („Über Gewohnheit“ pp.232-233).

<sup>175</sup> *EPW* §142.

that its very essentiality requires that it enter into existence—indeed, that the two be understood as but abstract moments of a higher ontological category (viz., actuality). It makes sense that Hegel would say that spirit makes itself *actual* in this way: as we saw above, in its ‘revelation’ or ‘manifestation,’ spirit goes outside of itself, ceasing to be merely inner, withdrawn away from all objectivity, and externalizes itself in a body. This body is only a sign for the soul: that is, the body refers only to the soul, as its pure expression. In other words, the ensouled body is an existence which reveals the essence—it is actuality.<sup>176</sup>

Hegel says of spirit “Its possibility is thus immediate, infinite, absolute i,”<sup>177</sup> clearly invoking the ontological proof. It is well known that what we call ‘the ontological proof’ appears in different forms throughout the history of philosophy from Anselm to Descartes, Spinoza to Hegel. The one feature however that is common in each of these philosophers’ versions of ‘the ontological proof’ is that the actuality of God or the absolute (i.e. spirit) is deduced from its mere possibility, or the idea of it. Hegel writes the sentence quoted above (his version of the ontological proof) as the last sentence of *Enzyklopädie* §383. To understand what he means, we should refer to the final sentence of §382 and the first of §383.

After stating that spirit can suffer absolute negativity and still maintain itself as affirmative, Hegel concludes §392 by saying “This possibility [viz. the maintenance on spirit’s part of itself as affirmative even in absolute negativity] is its [spirit’s] abstract,

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<sup>176</sup> It is in this sense that Wolff refers to Hegel’s conception of the “double-sidedness [*Zweiseitigkeit*]” of the soul (*Das Körper-Seele Problem* p.36, among other places).

<sup>177</sup> *EPW* §383.

inner universality, in which it has being-for-itself.” He begins §383 by continuing:

“This universality is also its [spirit’s] *existence* [Dasein].” Hegel identifies spirit’s “universality” (its ability to abstract from all objectivity, i.e. to suffer infinite pain) with its “possibility” because in this withdrawn state, spirit is only a possibility: as withdrawn from all determinacy, spirit is *actually* nothing at all (i.e. it suffers “absolute negativity”). Yet just as we described in chapter two, in this withdrawal from all objectivity, spirit immediately *makes itself* into an object, i.e. objectifies, determines, realizes its own self. Since this realization is the unity of the essence (spirit in its universality, its mere possibility) and existence (spirit as object, determinacy) it is *actuality*; and since it is not despite, but *in virtue of* its withdrawal from all objectivity that spirit rendered itself objective, we can say that spirit’s pure possibility is immediately infinite, absolute actuality.

We can see that the soul is actual in this sense because, as we have seen, the soul’s transition from sensation to feeling is its withdrawal from the body and from its knowledge of sensations as objective contents standing over against it. This withdrawal is spirit’s *possibility*, its inner universality in which it has its being-for-itself (in its feeling). However, in accordance with its concept, spirit in the form of the soul immediately objectifies its own self the moment it withdraws from all objectivity: thus in feeling (above all as self-feeling) the soul identifies its own self completely with its feeling. Yet here the concept is realized inadequately: the soul is not in fact the truth of nature, i.e. it does not achieve in its existence what nature in its highest form (animal life) merely strives for (viz. the complete assimilation of corporeity, becoming the ideality of its

body); the soul remains susceptible to sickness because the ‘moment of corporeity’ has not been assimilated (no mediation has arisen to replace the one provided by the body). The soul creates this mediation for itself only in habit, and only then is it the ideality of its body, and the truth of nature; only then is the body a sign for the soul, an existence which reveals the essence. The soul’s pure possibility (its withdrawal from its body in feeling) is thus immediately actuality: not in madness (the immediate identification with any feeling whatsoever), though madness does resemble the reality of spirit’s concept (and for this reason is honored with a place in the *Encyclopedia* as a distinct possibility of spirit, a certain expression of human nature); instead, it is through the soul’s determination of itself in habits that it becomes an *actual* soul, insofar as these habits are its own ‘spiritual body,’ a determinacy which reveals its own self.

### *Conclusion*

My hope in writing this dissertation was to articulate, if only in some obscure and ultimately inadequate way, the place of corporeity in human life. To achieve this, I carried out an exegetical study of Hegel’s anthropology, in which I have tried to do nothing more than explain what Hegel meant in the twenty-five paragraphs belonging to that section. Yet it would perhaps not be inappropriate here to comment on the implications of Hegel’s understanding of the human body and soul, to indicate possible directions for future research.

One such direction would be in responding to those today (of which there is no shortage) who present the human being as if it were simply natural (a machine or an animal)—or worse still, a bizarre and unstable combination of an otherworldly ghost and

a purely material machine or animal body (though I must reiterate here that I do not claim what I have written here, a mere exegesis of Hegel's anthropology, to be a refutation of materialism). To present the human being in these ways allows one to raise all sorts of apparent ethical dilemmas and aporiae concerning the very possibility of ethics. For instance, if humans are embodied, and the body (including the brain, for materialists the seat of desire and even the will) obeys natural (mechanical) laws inexorably, then how can human actions be free? If human actions are not free, then how can anyone be praised, blamed, or in any way held responsible?

Of course, the materialist conception of the human being is flatly ludicrous (to say nothing of the dualist conception). Consequently the common, uneducated person is more fit to define the human being than are many 'philosophers.' Even a child knows that the human being is not simply a machine, or an animal, that freedom belongs to the human being as such. The cause of the havoc materialism has been allowed to wreak on philosophy is an endemic failure to understand corporeity: viz., the failure to see that extension and mechanism do not exhaustively define corporeity, that there is a form of corporeity distinctive to human beings, and this form of corporeity is not animal corporeity—and still less is it mechanical. No one has thought more deeply than Hegel about the essence of corporeity and its meaning in human life, and so any effort to rid philosophy of the materialist scourge must draw on Hegel's work.

In his *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Outline*, Hegel shows that all of nature and spirit is the idea (the realized concept), and in this articulation of a kind of

monism, Hegel resembles the materialists.<sup>178</sup> Of course Hegel is not a materialist, and in his *Philosophy of Nature* (volume two of his *Encyclopedia*) he shows a sensitivity to nuance that is utterly lacking in the materialist conception of nature and corporeity. For, it is there that Hegel demonstrates how the concept of nature (as the idea external to itself) unfolds in a system of interrelated natural phenomena. The first stage involves mechanical relations between spatial bodies, but Hegel quickly shows that as mere extension and mechanism, nature is not able to be what it is essentially (hence the tension involved in mechanism, with a body having its own ‘self’ outside of it, in another, which it is yet perpetually unable to appropriate).

In Hegel’s deduction of “physics” he discusses natural phenomena which cannot be explained in mechanical terms (because mechanism is too poor and abstract of an explanatory framework): e.g. sound, light, heat, electricity, magnetism, and most importantly, chemical combination and dissociation. We have discussed this several times, and the reader may refer to earlier in this chapter, or to chapter one for a review of chemism. Suffice it to say that while chemism provides a more concrete version of nature, which is not subject to the defects of merely mechanical bodies, it too falls short of actualizing its concept, and thus is succeeded in Hegel’s account by organics, i.e. life, the highest form of mere nature.

In Hegel’s presentation of organics he discusses natural phenomena which can be explained neither in terms of mere mechanism, nor in terms of mere chemism, though, again, this is not because of any defect in the phenomena in question, but rather because of inadequacies in the explanatory capacities of mechanism and chemism, owing to their

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<sup>178</sup> Accordingly, he esteems materialism higher than dualism (*EPW* §389A).

abstractness. For this as well, the reader may refer to our earlier presentation of this material. For us here, what is important is to note that the living, animal body is beyond mere extension, even beyond mere chemism. The animal is most properly a system of assimilative processes (digestion, respiration, etc.) which take in nature and transform it into energy for the perpetuation of these same processes. To be sure, an animal is still extended, and can be determined in other merely mechanical (and chemical) ways: but *qua animal*, it is not extended, and it would be a cruel person indeed who treated an animal as if it were merely an extended object, like a stone.

If even the animal is not mere extension (and thus is not determined solely by mechanical relations and subject to mechanical laws with an iron necessity), then how far is the *human being* (who transcends even biological determinations) from mere extension, i.e. mechanical and unfree object! Why then do some philosophers<sup>179</sup> still insist on treating the human brain as if it were a system of levers and pulleys (a mere machine) which acted on the rest of the body in the manner of a mechanical cause, and was acted upon (via the network of nerves throughout the body) by natural objects in a merely mechanical way?

I hope that my dissertation will be able to contribute, if only in some small way, to the proper understanding of the place of corporeity in human life. That would mean showing that though the human being is in some sense mechanical (i.e. spatio-temporal), chemical (can react with other chemicals with respect to which it is polar), and organic (maintains its life by the continued assimilation of nature), it cannot be limited to any of

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<sup>179</sup> See for example Alec Hyslop "Methodological Epiphenomenalism," David Chalmers "Materialism and the Metaphysics of Modality," Stephen Yablo "Mental Causation."



these forms of corporeity. The properly human form of corporeity is neither extension, chemical neutrality, nor life, but rather *habit*, the mediating power that the soul creates for itself, to replace in some sense (without destroying of course) the body from which it has the capacity (as spirit) to withdraw.

It would be difficult to overstate the significance of habit for an understanding of Hegel's account of human nature and human identity. Let us recount here the heroic labors habit performs.

First, habit make possible the soul's mediation of its relation to its natural contents, such that the soul need not remain transfixed by every passing feeling, but instead can experience a certain feeling while still directing its attention elsewhere.

Second, habit makes it possible for the soul to become consciousness, i.e. to know itself as something distinct from the objects of its experience, and to know these objects as distinct from its own subjectivity.

Third, habit liberates the soul from the disease to which it is subject by its very nature: madness.

Fourth, by providing for the soul a properly spiritual 'body' (i.e. form of mediation of contents of experience), habit opens up a new world of experience by making accessible to the soul contents that do not belong to nature, but rather to relations between humans as such.

Fifth, as the power of symbol and sign production, habit makes possible the imagination; habit thus indirectly makes possible language, and even artistic creation.

Sixth, habit makes possible the acculturation of individuals in nations, religions, and states (and thus is indirectly responsible for everything these forms of spirit make possible).

From this catalogue of feats it is clear that habit is woven into the very fabric of human experience in the epistemological, psychological, social, ethical, aesthetic, political and religious dimensions. Habit forms the crux between the world of human culture and knowledge, and the world of nature, distinguishing and uniting them at the same time by assimilating the natural and determining it as an expression or sign of what is properly human. Hegel limits himself in the anthropology to an explicit demonstration of how the human body is thus rendered a sign for the soul; but implicit in this account are the demonstrations found in subsequent parts of his philosophy of spirit of how spirit shines through the appearance of natural externality: from the articulation of meaning in the sounds and shapes of language, to the aesthetic and religious expression and apprehension of the absolute itself in the natural world. An understanding of habit, and of what Hegel calls the ‘anthropological’ dimension generally, is therefore absolutely necessary for a grasp of the identity and vocation of embodied thinking and willing beings such as human beings are.

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Nicholas Mowad was born and raised in El Paso, Texas. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree with honors from the University of Texas at Austin in 2002 in philosophy, history, and French. He received his Master of Arts degree in philosophy from Loyola University Chicago in 2005, and his masters thesis was recognized by the Graduate School at Loyola as the Thesis of the Year in the Humanities (2006).

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The dissertation submitted by Nicholas Mowad has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Date

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Director's Signature

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